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iPosture: The Size of Electronic Consumer Devices Affects Our Behavior

by Maarten W. Bos and Amy J.C. Cuddy

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Abstract

We examined whether incidental body posture, prompted by working on electronic devices of different sizes, affects power-related behaviors. Grounded in research showing that adopting expansive body postures increases psychological power, we hypothesized that working on larger devices, which forces people to physically expand, causes users to behave more assertively. Participants were randomly assigned to interact with one of four electronic devices that varied in size: an iPod Touch, an iPad, a MacBook Pro (laptop computer), or an iMac (desktop computer). As hypothesized, compared to participants working on larger devices (e.g., an iMac), participants who worked on smaller devices (e.g., an iPad) behaved less assertively—waiting longer to interrupt an experimenter who had made them wait, or not interrupting at all.

Keywords: Technology; Behavior; Health; Size; Outcome or Result; Power and Influence;

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Contact

Division of Faculty & Research

Harvard Business School Soldiers Field Boston, MA 02163 infoservices@hbs.edu

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About the Author



Amy J.C. Cuddy Negotiation, Organizations & Markets

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