

When Words Aren't Getting Through to Her – Playbook

Use this right before or during a conversation that matters, so your body backs up what your words are already trying to say.

Before You Sit Down

1. **Clear your hands.** Set the phone face down and out of reach before the conversation starts. You don't need to silence it, just get it out of your hand and off the table between you.
2. **Pick your spot.** Sit or stand somewhere you can fully face her, not angled toward a screen, a doorway, or the next room. If you're already mid-conversation somewhere awkward, it's fine to say so and move.
3. **Drop your shoulders.** Take one slow breath and unclench your jaw before you say the first word. A tense body puts her on guard before you've said anything at all.
4. **Slow your entrance.** Walk in at a normal pace, not rushed and not dragging. Rushing in reads as urgency, and urgency reads as trouble.

What To Do In The Moment

Run through these five in order, and keep circling back to them as the conversation goes on.

1. **Position.** Turn your knees and shoulders toward her, not just your head. A head turn alone still reads as half attention.

2. **Contact.** Keep your hands free of the phone for the whole conversation, even during a lull or a pause.
3. **Distance.** Close a few inches of physical space if you can. Move from the far end of the couch, or step a little closer at the counter.
4. **Pace.** Slow your speech down, even if the topic feels urgent to you. Fast talking reads as pressure, no matter how calm your words are.
5. **Touch.** Add one small point of contact and hold it, a hand on her knee, her arm, or over her hand. Keep it simple and don't rush to pull away.

Mistakes To Skip

These undo the five shifts above even when your words are good, so it helps to know them by name before you fall into one without noticing.

- Half-watching a screen while you respond, which tells her the conversation is background noise.
- Crossed arms as a default resting position, which reads as a wall going up.
- Forced, unbroken eye contact without natural breaks, which feels performative instead of warm.
- Reaching for touch before she's given you a small opening, a pause, a softer tone.
- Exaggerated nodding or a fixed smile, which reads as a show rather than real presence.

Scripts By Communication Style

Find your pattern below and use the script that matches it. Each one comes with a second phrasing in case the first doesn't fit the moment, and a short line on what usually gets in the way for that style.

Connector: You tend to go quiet and agreeable under pressure, nodding along without saying what you really think. The shift here is adding one honest sentence to go with the calm

presence you already bring.

"I want to say what I really think here, not just agree." *[Look at her, hands still, shoulders relaxed.]* "I think we should try it your way, and here's the one part I'd change."

Alt phrasing: "Can I say something I'd normally just go along with instead of agreeing right away?"

Defender: Your jaw and shoulders tighten before you've said a word, and your instinct is to explain yourself first. The shift is dropping that tension before you speak, not after.

[Drop your shoulders, unclench your jaw, keep your hands open.] "You're right that I brushed that off earlier. I can see why that stung."

Alt phrasing: "Let me hear that all the way through before I respond to it."

Escalator: Your hands and voice speed up the more you care, and your body leans in fast. The shift is slowing both down on purpose, without losing the intensity underneath.

[Lower your voice a notch, still your hands.] "I care a lot about this, so I'm going to slow down and say it calmer."

Alt phrasing: "Give me a second, I want to say this the right way instead of the fast way."

Withdrawer: You go still and quiet under pressure, and your eyes drift away from hers. The shift is staying in the room and holding eye contact, even before you have the words ready.

[Stay seated, keep your eyes on her.] "I don't have all the words yet, but I'm not leaving. I'm right here."

Alt phrasing: "Give me a minute to find the words, but I'm staying put while I look for them."

If It Goes Sideways

Some nights you'll catch yourself mid-mistake, phone in hand or arms crossed halfway through the conversation. That's not a failure, it's just information you can act on right then. Naming it out loud usually works better than quietly trying to fix your posture and hoping she doesn't notice.

"I just realized I wasn't really facing you. Let me fix that." *[Turn toward her, set anything down.]* "Okay, go ahead, I'm listening now."

A flat or skeptical reaction from her afterward is a normal response to a pattern she's seen before, not proof that the correction didn't matter. Keep making the shift the next time, and the time after that. Trust builds through repetition, not one good moment, so don't judge the whole method by how one conversation goes.

Two-Minute Recap

If you only have a few seconds before you walk into the room, run through these five words: position, contact, distance, pace, touch. Say them to yourself once, then go.

The Payoff

When your posture, eye contact, and touch match your words, she stops having to translate you. That gap between what you mean and what she feels starts closing, often within the same conversation. Small physical cues tend to open the door to more warmth before anything else even gets discussed at length, and it starts with the very next talk you have, not some future version of you who's finally gotten this right.