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### Mind Doctor

In our fast-paced environment, reading a person's potential, not just reacting to their kinetic energy, can provide the cues needed to optimize the encounter.

The best interactions resonate with the nature of a person. Their essence is rarely defined by the power tie that they wear, the sensation left from the firm grip of the handshake, or even the piercing look of the eyes into our soul. Underneath these rapid fire sensory exchanges, our instincts are at play, helping us to be a mind doctor.

The time to deliberate is a luxury rarely afforded. Often, initial reactions and business decisions must occur in very rapid succession. Aggressive people don't always wear power ties, nor are the quiet ones necessarily pliable. The professional understands how to interpret body language, pregnant pauses and a person's choice of words. Although part of it is an art, it is also a skill, learned through introspection. It starts by observing one's self, our own messy desks and our own demeanor during a meeting. What signals am I sending? What signals do I want to send? Interpreting the observations of others requires more thought. Why was she hostile, or was she hostile at all? Is it me? Did I say the wrong thing or did she interpret it in the wrong way?

The pitch of the voice, the inclination toward or avoidance of eye contact, the rapidity of speech, all these provide some of the data for the mental computer to crunch. The calculations are done quickly and a plan is formed. The outcome—how to behave.

Be stern. Be nice. Be contrite. Be gentle. Be honest. Be natural. It's always slightly different, despite similarities in the settings of the encounter. How we fare in life's short moments determines the price that we pay, or that we receive, during our next encounters.

Now it is time for the next patient.

**H. William Strauss, Editor**  
*The Journal of Nuclear Medicine*