

## MICHEAL VICK'S APOLOGY

Last week when I was speaking in Myrtle Beach (It's a tough job but I was happy to do it) my audience asked me if I had seen the video of the Michael Vick apology and what I thought. Well, Esquire magazine called today and officially asked me to do a read of his apology, so here it goes.

Some people assume that as a body language expert I only look at the body language when I do a read. In fact, even my audience last week asked if I turn off the sound when I am making my analysis. While sometimes, I hit mute to focus on some action or to go through and see and overall mood or relationship; a read requires a careful comparison of the words to the body language and in this case the questions to Vicks credibility. The thought that he may be deceptive, concerning how contrite he really is, required an analysis of the statements or actual words that were said and timing of apologetic statements, as well as the more truthful body language that accompanied those words and also a paralanguage analysis of the sound of his voice, its tone, pacing volume level etc.

More simply, I do content analysis, body language analysis and the analysis of the words and music of the body language together.

The content analysis was fascinating. In deception diction you want to listen to what is actually said rather than what was scripted or what the speaker merely intended to say. Sometimes the person will make two statements that disagree with each other and only one of those statements is the truth.

Vick made contradictory statements in his opening. "I understand it's important or **NOT** important, you know as far as what you say or how you say things..." In law enforcement interrogations this would be interpreted as him really saying, "I hope you don't notice how I am going to say these things because I am lying!"

He then says he is going to speak straight from his heart and then he looks down, but the timing is wrong. Typically you feel something, you show it, and then you say it. Here it looks like he is acting because he says something, then pauses to think, "I need to look ashamed, how would that look, oh I better put my head down." And then in the head down motion he looks at the podium, almost as if he is looking down to read the next statements from his notes. He is not speaking spontaneously from his heart.

There is a cue that some liars give to show they know they just lied and they want to hide it. They stick out their tongue and run it from the right side of their mouths to the left side of their mouths (The right side of the mouth is controlled by the logical rational left hemisphere that is lies come from) I call this action a tongue eraser, but the tongue comes out to sweep away the lie. Vick makes this action repeatedly, in fact over 15 times, after apologetic statements in his speech.

He begins by saying, "First I want to apologize (tongue eraser) for all the things I've done and that I have allowed to happen." A truly apologetic person by the way would not

have added the “allowed to happen...” phrase that implies he feels he is not responsible for everything.

He then gives a personal apology to the commissioner, Arthur Blank (the owner) and coach Bobby Petrino. He blinks slowly twice before he says, “Coach Bobby Petrino.” Rapid blinking before or during a statement often means a person is lying, but these slow more deliberate blinks, before he says his coaches name, show he is truly ashamed of how he let his coach down. He symbolically can not look his coach in the eye. He again follows his Coaches name and then the full long personal apology with a tongue eraser, showing, overall, he is not fully and truly apologizing.

He then says, “I am totally disappointed in myself...” and looks down in a way that does show he is disappointed and ashamed of himself. But shortly thereafter says something so contradictory and deceptive it is almost laughable. “For one second will I sit right here, not for one second will I sit right here and point the finger and try to blame someone else.” In this case, the truth is revealed that he would like to take this moment to blame someone else. The fact that he even refers to blaming someone else and even comes back later in his speech and repeats that, “I do not blame” statement, implies he feels others are to blame or partially to blame, and that he doesn’t feel fully responsible.

Another odd juxtaposition of statements comes when he says, “I found God...I turn myself over to God. I think, that is the right thing to do, **as of right now.**” Implying that later, when he is not in front of the media, or later when he is out of jail he can go back to hell bent ways?

Then the video finishes with him saying, “Once Again I offer my deepest apologies, (tongue eraser.) I know that any apology does not sit well. But I would have liked at least one of his not to be erased. Esquire asked me to rate just how sorry he is on a scale of 1-100 (so, 0% being not very sorry, 100% being extremely sorry). I think he is very uncomfortable with his situation. I think he is ashamed of how he let down his coach, I think he realizes that he really messed up his kid fan base, I think he is very sorry this happened and I think he is only 30 percent truly apologized and took responsibility for his actions.