

Presentation Skills: Optimum Pitch

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Overview

Leaders must be able to deliver messages to small and large groups, and it is important to develop the most effective and powerful speaking skills. Whether speaking informally to two or three colleagues or addressing a hundred people, moderating the strength and pitch of your voice are important. Understanding how to support and project the voice when needed (using your "outdoor" voice or "indoor" voice) will be the focus of this presentation.

Common complaints about ineffective speakers include rushing (due to nerves and/or habit), mumbling (weak articulation), talking at an uncomfortable (higher) pitch than necessary (not connected to optimum pitch), lack of projection (insufficient volume/resonance) and running out of energy before the end of a sentence (poor breath support).

Some qualities of effective speakers include: passion, dedication, and humor, a thorough grasp of material. Empowering skills include grabbing the audience's attention right at the beginning, being clear about the message, finding a way to make the presentation memorable, responding effectively to questions (yet being honest if one does not have an answer), and having the ability to turn a question back to the questioner if necessary.

Learning how to use one's voice freely and effectively is important for a compelling leader. The message must be clear, crisp and energized.

Objectives

After this presentation, participants will:

1. Do a 'dive-bomb' and understand its use
2. Use effective breath support
3. Find optimum pitch and describe why it is valuable

Important Teaching Points

- Preparing to speak in public involves physical, psychological and emotional work
- 60-30-10 formula: physical actions and body language impact stronger than words (60%), and emotional connection to words (30%) is more powerful than the actual words used (10%)
- Learn to use a hand or lapel microphone, and other equipment seamlessly
- Rehearse and practice your presentation

Resources / References

1. Cameron, Ron. (1999). *Acting Skills for Life* (3rd ed.) Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press.
2. Rogers, Bruce. (1999). *You Can Say That Again!* Toronto, ON: Dundurn Press.