



Face, Base, and Pace

A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position.

—John Maxwell

According to the landmark study by Professor Albert Mehrabian, someone's initial perception of another person's communication breaks down three ways:

Verbal (*what we say*) _____ %

Vocal (*how we sound*) _____ %

Visual (*how we appear*) _____ %

Posture

The way you hold your body is called your *posture*. As we discussed in earlier units, what your audience sees when you walk on-stage has a large impact on their overall impression of you. It is essential that you become aware of what your body language communicates to an audience. Does it enhance or detract from your message?

Maintaining proper posture will allow you to begin your speech or presentation from an open, neutral position. Proper posture can also help to reduce the possibility of injury and can actually make you stronger. By aligning your joints properly, muscles are able to activate and more easily perform their specific functions or movements.

When presenting or speaking, a speaker should begin from a relaxed, neutral, and open position. We will call this your **Home Base Position**.

Posture reflects the attitude of life.

—Kyle Yamashiro



EXERCISE: Finding Your Home Base Position

To experience what a strong Home Base Position feels like, follow these steps:

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your weight evenly distributed.
2. Make sure your knees are unlocked.
3. Center and lock your pelvis to avoid shifting and swaying.
4. Let your arms, hands, and fingers relax by your sides.
5. Hold your chest open and elevated.
6. Keep your shoulders relaxed.
7. Keep your chin parallel to the ground.
8. Focus your eyes forward.

In what areas of your body do you tend to hold tension?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world.

—John Locke

Your body and voice are your instruments, much the same way a cello is an instrument for the cellist. Employing a thorough and consistent warm-up is critical for to delivering a successful speech or presentation. A proper warm-up increases the supply of blood and oxygen to the muscles, enhances coordination and releases unwanted muscle tension in the body.



EXERCISE: Warming Up Your Instrument

In the moments before going in front of your audience, take five minutes to loosen and warm-up your body.

1. **Neck:** Let your head fall forward and stretch the neck muscles. Next, rotate your left ear to your left shoulder and your right ear to your right shoulder.
2. **Eyes:** Alternate from a squinting (little eyes) to wide-eyed (big eyes).
3. **Face:** Alternate between your biggest expression (surprise) to your smallest expression (sour) to engage the muscles of the face.
4. **Tongue:** Stretch your tongue to your nose, your chin, and your cheeks.
5. **Lips:** Blow air through your lips to make a motorboat sound.
6. **Jaw:** Mimic chewing a very large piece of bubble gum to stretch the jaw muscles.
7. **Shoulders:** Roll shoulders in a circular motion. Then reverse the direction. Shrug and release.
8. **Arms:** Extend your arms and rotate them in a circular motion. Reverse.
9. **Wrists:** Rotate your wrists in a circular motion. Reverse.
10. **Fingers:** As if your fingers are dripping with water, vigorously shake them dry.
11. **Back:** Mimic the motion of hugging a tree to stretch out the back muscles.
12. **Chest:** Mimic the motion of crushing an orange between your shoulder blades to stretch out your chest.
13. **Legs:** Shake out any tension in your legs. Follow with deep knee bends.
14. **Ankles:** Standing on one foot, rotate your opposite ankle in a circular motion. Repeat on the other foot.

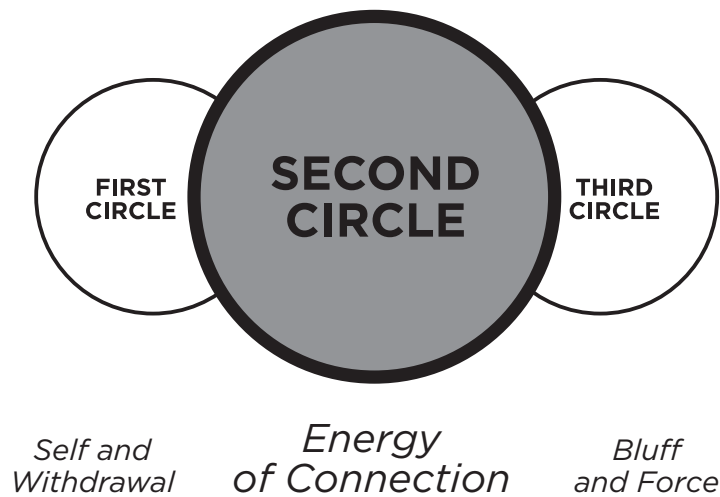


Presence allows experience.

—Patsy Rodenburg

The Three Circles of Energy

The way you communicate with others affects how people perceive you and how effectively you convey your message. Acting teacher and voice coach Patsy Rodenburg divided human energy into three basic circles:



FIRST CIRCLE

FIRST CIRCLE: Self and Withdrawal (energy moving inwards)

The first circle of energy is generally self-focused, more about taking than giving. First circle energy closes you off in a bubble so you appear disengaged, the energy moving inward, making it impossible to mutually engage in conversation and demonstrate positive presence.

First Circle Characteristics:

- Shallow breathing
- Limited or no movement
- Limited or absent gestures
- Ineffective eye contact
- Limited facial expressions
- Visible lack of energy/passion
- Tense body posture
- Monotone and low volume


**THIRD
CIRCLE**
THIRD CIRCLE: Bluff and Force (energy moving outwards)

The third circle of energy is generally more passionate or enthusiastic but isn't always effective. This energy is outward facing, simply blasted at an audience. Energy is moving outwards without receiving anything in return. Unable to listen to others around you, the focus is on yourself.

Third Circle Characteristics:

- Gestures that are too broad
- Tense body posture
- Loud or unnecessary volume
- Shallow breathing
- Facial expressions that are too big
- Excess or nervous energy in body
- General, unspecific movement
- Ineffective eye contact

**SECOND
CIRCLE**
SECOND CIRCLE: Energy of Connection (energy moves in and out)

The second circle of energy is the ideal circle to utilize when communicating with others. You are present, alert, and available. Second circle energy is focused and passionate, effortless and efficient. You hear and are heard. You notice details about others and acknowledge their feelings.

Second Circle Characteristics:

- Facial expressions support intention
- Expansive and appropriate gestures
- Eye contact is consistent, not constant
- Breath is controlled and supports voice
- Movement is purposeful
- Voice is free of monotone
- Voice is clearly audible
- Body posture is tension-free



Which circle of energy is utilized when someone is described as the following?

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| • <i>Timid</i> | • <i>Obnoxious</i> | • <i>Insecure</i> |
| • <i>Impatient</i> | • <i>Open</i> | • <i>Friendly</i> |
| • <i>Committed</i> | • <i>Distant</i> | • <i>Arrogant</i> |



Presenting While Seated

While most formal presentations take place with a speaker standing, some, because of space constraints or audience size, occur in less formal settings such as boardrooms, conference rooms, or offices.

Below are some tips to remember when presenting while seated:

1. **Keep your energy up.** When presenting while seated, it is easy to let all of your energy drain into your chair instead of focusing it outward toward the person you are addressing.
2. **Watch your posture.** Don't slump or sag in your chair. This may make you appear overly casual or too relaxed. Even when presenting while seated, it is important to utilize a strong Home Base Position. Keep your spine straight (but not stiff) to communicate that you are present and alert.
3. **Modulate gestures; don't eliminate them.** Continue to use expressive gestures. Since your audience is closer to you, your gestures can be smaller in size.
4. **Connect through eye contact.** Keep your eyes up and try not to look down at the table while you are speaking. Make sure you share your eye contact with the entire group, connecting with every person at the table, including the people sitting on either side of you.
5. **Breathe.** Since presenting around a table is a more intimate than a formal presentation, every facial expression or emotion that registers will be seen and interpreted by your audience. Because of this, it is important you stay relaxed and project a confident presence at all times. Utilizing core breathing will help you do that.
6. **Plant your feet.** Because your audience is seated so closely, keep your feet planted firmly on the floor to ground yourself. This will help limit extraneous movement that could make you appear less than confident.
7. **Keep your hands above the table.** Keep your hands on the table—either folded or near each other—when you are not using them for gesturing. Be careful not to fidget with objects such as rings, pens, or paper clips as this can be distracting.



Vocal Dynamics

Voice is the tool by which all activities involving speech are performed, whether during public speaking, acting, business speaking, or simple conversation. We use it to inform, persuade, and connect with other people. Your voice is the key to delivering your words with intention.



EXERCISE: Warming up the Voice

STEP 1: Begin by focusing on your core breath, inhaling for a count of five and exhaling for a count of five.

STEP 2: Repeat the breathing process, this time allowing the sound of a moan to be released during your exhalation, connecting the breath to the voice.

STEP 3: Starting at the center of your range, make the “ah” sound and gently cascade from the lowest pitch of your voice to the highest pitch and back to the lowest again, engaging the entire register.

STEP 4: Warm up the four articulators (lips, jaw, tongue, soft palate) by repeating the following phrases aloud, enunciating for crisp and clear diction:

Mumsy made me mash my mutton (lips)

Twenty tentacles tickling Ted (tongue)

Charlie chews his chocolate shoes (jaw)

Ricky's sticky yucky duckies (soft palate)

Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning.

—Maya Angelou



Five Qualities of the Human Voice

These five qualities are: volume, pitch, inflection, pace, and articulation.

1. **VOLUME:** A speaker must be able to properly adjust the volume of his voice depending on the audience and setting. Play to the back row, not the front row.
2. **PITCH:** A speaker's pitch should be natural and pleasing. Variety in pitch is essential. It is the key to speaking with intention.



EXERCISE: Pitch for Meaning

The exact same words often have different meanings depending on the pitch of your voice used when speaking. Using the word "okay," vary your pitch to match the expressions below:

- *I understand.*
- *Fantastic!*
- *Do you understand?*
- *I'm very disappointed.*
- *Enough already!*
- *I think you are mistaken.*



EXERCISE: Eliminating Monotone

To practice varying your pitch, read the excerpt below as if you are reading a fairy tale to a small child, exploring the music of your voice.

Once upon a time, in a far-off village, there lived a little country girl, the prettiest creature who was ever seen. Her mother was excessively fond of her, and her grandmother doted on her still more. This good woman had a little red riding hood made for her. It suited the girl so extremely well that everyone in the village came to calling her Little Red Riding Hood.



There is no index of character so sure as the voice.

—Benjamin Disraeli

3. **INFLECTION:** A speaker can use vocal inflection in the following ways:

Upward inflection—this takes the voice up at the end of a word or phrase. It can be used to express doubt, friendliness, surprise, and to request information.

Downward inflection—this takes the pitch of the voice down at the end of a word or phrase. It can be used to express certainty, command, defiance, and when giving facts or information.



How would inflection be used with the following phrases?

“Hello?”

“It would be a pleasure doing business with you.”

“My rate is \$300/hour.”

“Does that figure sound acceptable to you?”

“I am currently vice-president of sales and marketing.”

4. **PACE:** A speaker should utilize changes in pace to help keep an audience engaged and interested. Think of your speech like a roller coaster. We love roller coasters because they go slow one moment and fast the next—always moving. Vary the pace at which you deliver your speech to give it the feel of a vocal journey.



While most people think at a speed of approximately _____ words per minute, the optimal rate for speaking is _____ words per minute.



EXERCISE: Utilizing Pace

To practice slowing your pace, read the following paragraph slowly and aloud, taking a two-second pause after each period:

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you and good evening. My name is Alex Jarrett. The agenda for this meeting has been identified, but unlike most business presentations, the presenter hasn't been provided with a script. As a matter of fact, I have been permitted to choose my own words and discuss my own ideas regarding the choice that we face in the next few weeks. This is a big moment for us. A big moment for our company. The decisions we make today will reverberate within these walls not for months, but for years and decades to come.

Silence may be as variously shaded as speech.

—Edith Wharton

Power of the Pause

When it comes to pauses, small is not the same as trivial. Use moments of silence for impact. A pause communicates to an audience that you are in charge and are setting the pace and direction of the communication. A pause will help keep you grounded and will create a connection between the voice and the body.

There are three different types of pauses you can use in a communication context:

1. _____ These are moments of silence that are dictated by your material or visual aid, allowing your audience to read or absorb information.
2. _____ In these instances, you can use silence to evoke or provoke an emotional response from your audience, perhaps pausing for effect to highlight a specific thought or draw attention to a fact or figure.
3. _____ These are times during your communication where you need to stop speaking so you can take a breath or a sip of water.



5. **ARTICULATION:** A speaker uses articulation to connect the separate sound units to help form words and phrases. By using your articulators effectively, a speaker will avoid sloppy speech, mumbling, and dropping the ends of words or phrases.

There are four movable articulators:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Lips | Sounds formed: m, p, b, w, v, f
Warm-up: <i>Mumsy made me mash my mutton.</i> |
| 2. Jaw | The jaw is a moveable articulator and changes the size of the vocal tract to help with clarity.
Warm-up: <i>Charlie chews his chocolate shoes.</i> |
| 3. Tongue | Sounds formed: s, z, d, t, th, l, sh, r
Warm-up: <i>Twenty tentacles tickling Ted.</i> |
| 4. Soft palate | Sounds formed: k, g, n, ng
Warm-up: <i>Ricky's sticky yucky duckies.</i> |

Tongue Twister warm-ups:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <i>The skunk thunk the stump stunk</i> | 8. <i>Rubber baby buggy bumpers</i> |
| 2. <i>Good blood, bad blood</i> | 9. <i>The lips, the teeth, the tip of the tongue</i> |
| 3. <i>BeBoBa bubble bath</i> | 10. <i>Bobby Babcock's bagpipes</i> |
| 4. <i>Red leather, yellow leather</i> | 11. <i>I slit a sheet, a sheet I slit, upon a slitted sheet I sit</i> |
| 5. <i>Ba Da Ga Da, Ba Da Ga Da</i> | 12. <i>Fresh fried fish, fish fried fresh</i> |
| 6. <i>Unique New York</i> | 13. <i>A proper cup of coffee in a proper coffee cup</i> |
| 7. <i>Shave a cedar shingle thin</i> | 14. <i>The thirty thorny thistles thawed throughout</i> |

All I have is a voice.
—W.H. Auden



Gestures

Gestures are an important part of your overall visual picture and are used to assist in the communication of your words and ideas.

There are five basic types of gestures:

1. **Conventional gestures** have widely-understood meanings that have been determined and agreed upon by a specific community or culture.
2. **Descriptive gestures** are used to clarify or illustrate your words by indicating size, shape, direction, or function.
3. **Emphatic gestures** emphasize a point by underscoring the emotion behind the words being spoken.
4. **Prompting gestures** are used to evoke a desired response from your audience.
5. **Coded gestures** are created by pre-established agreement between a group or individuals.

Ineffective Gestures are gestures that are unnatural, stiff, planned, lazy, or fidgety and often communicate nervousness, lack of confidence and insecurity about yourself and your topic. Examples include:

- Finger pointing
- Hands behind your back
- Hands in pockets
- Fig leaf
- Playing with a prop
- T-Rex arms
- Speaking before planting
- Gestures below the waist

Effective Gestures should be meaningful and appropriate to your content. These gestures should help to paint a picture of, share your emotion toward, or emphasize specific points of your message. Effective gestures will support the intention you are trying to convey.

Effective gestures should:

- Be varied
- Be spontaneous
- Be specific
- Be motivated by your content
- Be expansive, not constrictive
- Be appropriate in size



EXERCISE: Spontaneous Gestures

Movement

Movement can help reinforce your verbal message and add variety to your speech or presentation. Incorporating some movement is especially important if you are using a lectern. In this instance, it is easy to become trapped behind or blocked by the lectern and separated from your audience.

Movement during a presentation should be direct and smooth. If you choose to move, you must have a purpose for doing so. Movement is especially useful for transitions.



Research shows that humans exhibit at least _____ distinct styles of walking.



EXERCISE: Taking the Stage

Suit the action to the word, the word to the action.

—Shakespeare