



London Speech
Workshop



HOW TO SPEAK MORE CLEARLY AT WORK

How to improve vocal charisma to become more
authoritative & get your message
across at work



INTRODUCTION

We all know what it is like to have off days in the office, when we are just not in our groove. When a meeting goes awry. When the thing we have asked for hasn't been done, or worse, when we are talking and people don't seem to be listening. And either we hope tomorrow will be better, or we are lucky enough to have some tricks that we bring out to get things firing from all cylinders again.

Whether you feel that communication is just not your *forté*, or you feel like things are pretty fantastic in that department, until they are not, we can all benefit from some tricks and tools to pull out when we need them.

This little eBook has three fabulous tools to use when you are having one of those 'off' office days. Helping you to turn it around to find your optimum, again and again and again.

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SCENARIO: Alan asks for his report on the debt analysis for the corporate clients over the last three months to be on his desk by the end of the day. He asks it with a sigh, for he has asked for it every few days for the last two weeks. He is close to giving up and doing it himself, even though it is the job of his assistant's assistant.

*So what is Alan doing wrong?
Why is he not getting what he
wants? And how can he do it
right?*



TOOL ONE:

WORD POWER

When we speak, we use words. And words have a lot of potential power. Each word is a crisp little nugget of potential, that as the speaker you can either release or not.

Firstly, some words are more important than others. We have back seat words and front seat words. Back seat words are all those boring little inbetween words. The grammatical noises that neaten up our conversation, give it context, but don't offer much new meaning.

Then you have the front seat words, these are the words that hold your meaning and your intention. They are the words with potential.

So tip number one, put your attention onto the front seat words, and enunciate properly!

This means there is no room for mumbling. No chewed up little morsels of words being dropped at the end of the sentences. Let's visit Alan for an example.

Alan: Can I have this report on my desk by the end of the day please?

If he were to give all these words equal status and to mumble them all as if they have no value, likelihood is he wont be getting his report. If on the other hand he picks his front seat words and makes sure that they are said with energy and clarity, then the chances of him getting his report have just increased tenfold!

Alan: Can I have this report on my desk by the end of the day, please.

I have highlighted the front seat words above. With some practice, you will be able to pick out the front seat words as you speak. For normal conversation, you don't need to get them all but certainly the ones which are important to you. If you let the words you deem important get your emphasis and energy, there is a fantastic result: other people will get them too. We call this *idea in head*. You decide which words you want to get into the other person's head, and then get them there. How you do it is pretty instinctive. But if you do need a bit more guidance here are two tips.

A word is made up of vowels and consonants and they each have a different purpose.



TIP: Vowels are a space to put your feelings in

The vowels provide a space, a moment in time to put your feelings in. Which means you can fill the space between two consonants with some colour. Lets say you pick the words report and day from the sentence above to get into the persons head. You can use the vowels to show just how much you want the report, length-en-ing them and making eye contact as you do.

TIP: Consonants show efficiency and respect

Meanwhile consonants are important to show that you respect the language, and that you respect your listener too. 'repor' sounds a lot less efficient than report with a crisp 't'.

So make sure you pick your words that are essential to your point or request, and say them with crisp consonants and clear vowels filled with intention and you will be half way there.



TOOL TWO:

DON'T BEAT ABOUT THE BUSH

Alan: Err, um... I really do need this report, the one I've been asking you for for some time. I'd like it soon really... can you give it...is it finished yet? I know you must be quite busy but...Sorry to keep on but I have been asking... do you think I can have it today if that's okay?

It's important that you ask for your request with clarity. Don't hide it among a whole load of other words and apologies and reasons so that the individual has no idea what you want. When you know what you want, use your words to carve out the quickest route possible, and if you can put a time on it and even a place that will all help make it more achievable.

In the above example, Alan is letting a lot of other concerns get in the way of his direct request for the report. He is worrying about being rude, he is concerned about hassling the other person, he is trying to be understanding and considerate.

All of these have their place, but it is important that he is able to use his communication to get a job done. If he is concerned with his assistant not having time to do the task, he needs to ask it straight up.

"I have been asking for this report for over three weeks, is there some reason why you haven't yet given it to me *that I should know about?*"

By adding '*that I should know about*' it ensures that Alan won't be given a whole lot of excuses. It might be the case that his assistant is too busy, or doesn't know how to do it, or is prioritising other things. Whatever it is, Alan should know about it, so he can give them the appropriate guidance.

However, let's assume there is no underlying problem here, other than his assistant not getting round to it. If this is the case, then the more get-out clauses Alan offers, the more his assistant will feel relaxed about not doing the report. In this case, a clear straight up request, with a time and place will work wonders. And Alan can still check that his assistant feels this is feasible.

I'd like the report on my desk by the end of the day. Can you do this?

Asking a question is very powerful as it gets their buy-in. It is all too easy for a person to nod and then forget. But if you ask a question and they give you a yes, it quickly becomes more likely that they will do it. If they say no, then you can follow with a question of when they can do it. Get your time, get them to commit and then put it in writing:



Assistant: Oh I'm not sure, the end of the day, might be tough.

Alan: when can you have it done and on my desk by?

Assistant: Oh I'm not sure.

Alan: is tomorrow feasible?

Assistant: I guess so

Alan: great – lets say end of the day tomorrow. 5pm agreed? (assistant nods) Fantastic. I will put this in an email to you right now to confirm.

And of course, the email will begin with 'as agreed just now..'

Sometimes it's simply about pinning people down...

TOOL THREE:

HOW ALAN FINDS HIS VOICE IN A MEETING

You're in a meeting and everyone is talking. You try to say something but people talk over you or interrupt. Isn't it horrible? Just as bad as being cut up in a traffic jam, when someone just skips in front. And they don't get any further than you but you feel this flush of irritation at having your rightful space taken.

Well, this has happened to Alan, and he has recently been going into meetings trying not speaking at all, so he doesn't have to face the flush / humiliation of being talked over.

Oh Alan. It doesn't have to be like this. We have some juicy tools for you to try. **Your voice is worth it.**

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TIP ONE: People are talking and you have something to say but their voices are loud....

Wait for a little lull if you like, sometimes that's a better entry point if your voice is not so loud, and then, and this is the tip, come in on a yes....

Say something positive, that's a great idea, I like that because, or simply 'YES'. And you know what, even the loudest speakers will shush for something positive said in their direction....

What if you don't think its good? Well – there is no place for deceit, but you can usually find some-thing positive to say. There are a huge number of words in the English language designed to do just this, be positive without actually showing your feelings. Interesting, remarkable, curious, stimulating, noteworthy, thought provoking...



TIP TWO: Now you are talking. You've used trick one, found people turned to face you and hear the nice thing you were saying and the attention is on you. Success! But how do you hold the attention?

Well. Firstly, use what you learnt in section one of the eBook, pick the words you want to get in your listeners' heads and say them clearly and with colour.

Secondly, try and make clear succinct points. Aim for the point and take the direct route there. For this, it can be helpful, if you have a mind than can get into a jumble, to jot down the points you want to make and number them in the order you want to make them. You could literally write down five trigger words and then number them one to five. It will take about thirty seconds (and do this just before you do your masterful interjection). Then when you come to speak, you will have a structure to follow.

Thirdly, when you have your clear message, you want to be delivering it to your listeners. You do this with eye contact, and with inflection. Look at the people in the room, and look at them particularly at the ideas you want to get into their heads and on the final words of the thought.



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If you make eye-contact in these places people get the impression that you really care about them receiving your message. So for example if Alan says,

I have developed a new strategy for managing the accounts for the bigger clients as the current system isn't working so well.

He could make eye contact on '*bigger clients*' and '*working so well*'

He could also make eye contact on '*new strategy*' and '*managing the accounts*'. He gets to decide what the most important points are, and as long as he delivers these, then he will find people start absorbing what he is saying in a whole new way.





We hope these tips help you find your groove if you are feeling off, or
build up the vocal authority you need and deserve.

Good luck and let us know how it goes!



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