

Using Your Voice to Inspire & Engage

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Building Emotionally Intelligence Communication

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The ringmaster's ability to make his/her words reach out and inspire, engage the audience is critical to the success of the circus. The ringmaster has to use a voice that is emotionally intelligent; a voice that inspires engages and leads others to take interest and feel excited by what he/she is saying.

Whether you are taking center stage, or speaking from the crowd, the way you speak has an enormous impact on how your message is received. While studies confirm that tone is even more important than content to the listener, there is another important factor to consider. A factor that can allow one to grab our listeners' attention, underscore a point, implant a thought, and even punch up an idea.

Consonants can help us deliver verbal messages with maximum impact. More than vocal range, more than volume, our ability to really use bold consonants when we speak can inspire and engage listeners. Consonants can work for us too when we speak. They grab our listeners' attention and hold on to it.

They underscore the intensity of our words and highlight our emotions. Any time you want to *drive* home a point, *implant* a thought, or *punch* up an idea, you can do it with a consonant.

The power of using consonants properly can help you increase expressiveness, clarity and impact. In order to make a word or an idea stand out, we can lengthen the consonant at the beginning of the word, or in the syllable we want to emphasize, because in doing so we create the illusion of being louder.

Why does stretching a consonant really work in helping to give our speech extra emphasis? Because our speech is like music in that it has a certain flow and rhythm. Interrupting or changing the flow breaks the normal rhythm which helps highlight important words for the listener.

Communicating what we want to get through the listener is critically important, and often difficult because what we say is received by a listener who is basically speaking listening by filtering our words through his/her particular interests, experience and personal filters while filling in the gaps mentally between the words that we speak.

What we say is key, but so is having the right tone, speaking clearly, and learning to draw attention to particular words by stretching out consonants and slightly delaying the rest of the word. Consider the ringmaster emphasizing LLLLLLadies and gentlemenNNNN. Learning to use the power of consonants can really draw your audience in. The radio announcer will tell you to have a Grrrrrrreat Dddday.

The communication that people value is communication that speaks to them. Honest, authentic communication that has an engaging tone, and that uses consonants to emphasize words that will help the listener understand what we want to communicate is important because it is emotionally intelligent communication that inspires and engages.

We want to help the listener pay attention and remember our message using an elongated consonant is powerful. A presentation may be well prepared and full of important information, but attention spans are short. Face it. We are, first and foremost, interested in ourselves and how what someone else is saying relates to *us*. Learning to build emotionally intelligent communication COUNTS.

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