

Notes:

Speaking Qualities

It's Not What You Say, It's How You Say It

articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility for choosing the "right words to express a thought. • Knowing your subject matter and practicing your material will increase your level of articulation significantly. • The production of speech sounds by the vocal organs. • Most professional trainers have no problem with the physical aspects of articulation. You can improve the performance of your vocal organs by doing warm up exercises before you teach.
assimilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process by which a speech sound becomes similar to a neighboring sound. Assimilation makes you less easy to understand. • <i>Assimilation of place</i> is very common. Many Americans say something like "oapmeal" instead of oatmeal. • <i>Assimilation of manner</i> is also common. We hear people say "injun" and "soljer" instead of Indian and soldier. • <i>Assimilation of voice</i> is demonstrated when speakers articulate an "f" instead of a "v", thus turning "have to" into "haf to."
enunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mechanics of speech—the clarity with which you speak your words. • When you enunciate strictly, you reduce your tendency to assimilate words (see above). Your audience will understand you, but you may sound coldly formal, even unnatural. • Professional trainers use a blend of strict and casual enunciation. Again, the focus is less on "correctness", more on clarity.
inflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflection describes the use of tone and pitch, the rise and fall of your voice, the way you emphasize words in a sentence. • Too little inflection (often described as monotone) can be boring. It can diminish an otherwise stimulating learning environment. • Too much inflection can be annoying. <p>"I didn't SAY you were stupid."</p> <p>"I didn't say YOU were stupid."</p> <p>"I didn't say you were STUPID."</p>

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pronunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mechanics of sounds or words chosen. • Accents are fine. Just make sure you and your audience understand one another. • If you are unsure about the pronunciation of a technical term or acronym, ask someone.
rate of speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speed of phrases and ideas spoken and the proper use of pauses. • Speak at a moderate pace. Ask peers for feedback! • Pause for a few seconds between ideas. Learners need time to digest. If you rush from point to point without any silence, learners will soon have an overload of information. You will get to a point where they are unable to pay attention to much of what you say.
volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projection or loudness; distance that your voice will carry. • Don't be afraid to do a volume test after the learners are seated. • An increase in volume can help reduce the quivers in your voice.

Vocal Technique Exercises

You can do these exercises on your own as warm-ups before you give a presentation.

articulation	<p>These exercises prepare the various muscles around your mouth, throat, and neck for lecturing:</p> <p><u>Stretching</u></p> <p>Open your mouth as wide as you can. Now close it. Repeat 5 times.</p> <p><u>Vowels</u></p> <p>Say each vowel (A-E-I-O-U), and exaggerate the use of the facial muscles involved. Repeat as needed. Singers and stage actors use this exercise regularly.</p> <p><u>Tah-Lah-Nah</u></p> <p>Repeat these syllables several times, exaggerating the touch of your tongue on the roof of your mouth.</p>
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assimilation & enunciation	<p>Practice the phrases below, making an effort not to assimilate. Notice that in order to enunciate without assimilation, you naturally have to slow your rate of speech.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was mashed. It was smashed. • That's low. That slow. That's slow. • This mile. This smile. • Gate 10. Gate N. • Four aces. Four races. <p>Overemphasize the plosive sounds (b, d, g, j, p ,t, k, and ch) in the sentences below. In addition to helping you focus on crisp enunciation, this also provides a good warm-up for the vocal organs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To beep, or not to beep, that is the question. • Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater, bought a dog but could not keep her. • Bad dog! Just put that cat back on the porch. • Let's take a peek at Ted's good project. • Dot's pet parrot bit Pat's dog Gipper.
rate of speech & volume	<p>Read an excerpt from the software documentation manual. Ask your classmates to evaluate your pace and volume.</p> <p>Or try excerpts from teller training material.</p> <p>At home you can practice when reading stories to your kids or mimicking everything the radio announcer says during your drive to work.</p>
inflection	<p>Repeat the following phrase out loud, each time emphasizing the word in bold. Notice how your intonation changes the meaning of each sentence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I never said he stole money. • I never said he stole money. • I never said he stole money. • I never said he stole money. • I never said he stole money. • I never said he stole money. <p>Inflection also changes meaning. Say these pairs of phrases out loud:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That's entertainment! That's entertainment? • We're having fish again! We're having fish again?

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