

Sound Strategy

Meeting with the board of directors? Grab their attention by varying your pitch, volume, pause and intonation to get the reaction you want.

By Anita I. Jacobs, Speaking Consultant

“It’s not what you say, but how you say it.” How many times have you heard that old adage? Now research supports its truth. Researchers have found that when you speak to people, getting your message across depends on these factors:

- Words = 7%
- Body language = 55%
- Sound of the voice = 38%

These figures show the importance of how you say it. It takes about 30 seconds for people to sum you up. After you begin to speak, they decide whether they want to trust you or like you in 30 seconds. (These are significant considerations when you’re making a presentation, trying to close a sale or attempting to soothe an angry member.)

30 seconds to win

Organization is critical. Motivation, method, personal characteristics and strategy are the first set of necessary elements in organizing your 30-second impression. Don’t waste that first 30 seconds. Here’s how to begin:

1. Define your motivation. What’s the underlying reason behind the action you are about to take in delivering your spoken message? Once you define your motivation, you must figure out how to satisfy it.
2. Develop a method that will allow you to hook your audience—a way to get them to give you the action or reaction you seek.
3. Who will get you what you want? In order to answer this question, you must learn the personal characteristics of those you are addressing. You want to know what you are going to say and to whom you are going to say it; then pick a technique (your strategy) that will hook them.

Your voice should reflect your professional status, title, position and training.

4. Develop a strategy that successfully asks for the action/reaction you want. Your strategy involves combining your motivation, your method and what you know about the personal characteristics of your audience in a way that will get them to give you what you want.

Sometimes you don’t want a direct action. Sometimes you just want a subtle response to indicate you’re getting

through. That’s a reaction. Reactions can be just as powerful as actions. Decisions can depend on motivation.

Your voice should reflect your professional status, title, position, training, competence, age and sex. The second set of elements you’ll employ to accomplish your goal consists of four essential voice qualities—pitch, volume, pause and intonation.

Pitch

Pitch tells people immediately whether you’re weak or strong. It’s an accurate indication of personality. When we speak, we use approximately 10 notes. Most good speakers go up and down the scale, using all 10 notes.

However, we all possess optimal pitch—that individual core note that’s appropriate for your size, sex and age. You can find this note by saying the words “uh, um” up and down the scale until they vibrate in the area around your nose, mouth and lips.

Your optimal pitch changes throughout your life. It affects your professional status and the impression that you

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make on people. When you speak with someone for the first time by phone, pitch usually is the first element that allows you to form a mental picture of the other party.

If the person on the other end uses only a few notes, it indicates a lack of vigor. A female with a high-pitched voice forms a mental picture of a light, non-serious personality. A man with a high-pitched voice sounds helpless or weak. A very low-pitched female voice signals an aggressive personality type. In a male, the low-pitched voice might sound intimidating.

People who speak in their optimal-pitch range are perceived as self-assured. They can use their voices in many different ways without croaking, groaning or putting out messages that belie their personalities or intentions.

Volume

Volume is the second quality that you can learn to use effectively to get what you want. You can be speaking at
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your optimum pitch, but if you speak too loudly you'll sound aggressive, which might not be appropriate for what you're saying.

The important feature of volume is appropriateness. How loud or how soft you speak must be appropriate to what you are saying and how you look. Your voice and your image must go together. Speaking loudly is an indication of nervousness, anxiety and even hostility. When the volume goes up, we hear anger or frustration. Often it is used as a tool for interruption, excitement, enthusiasm, fear, authority, aggression, assertion and confidence. Turn down the volume to express sympathy, concern and understanding.

Pause

Pause is the third quality you can use to help you project your targeted image. Pause is an extremely valuable tool for stressing different points in your message. The pause gives people time to react to what you are saying. Pausing strategically can change the entire perception people have. Use—but don't overuse—the strategic pause.

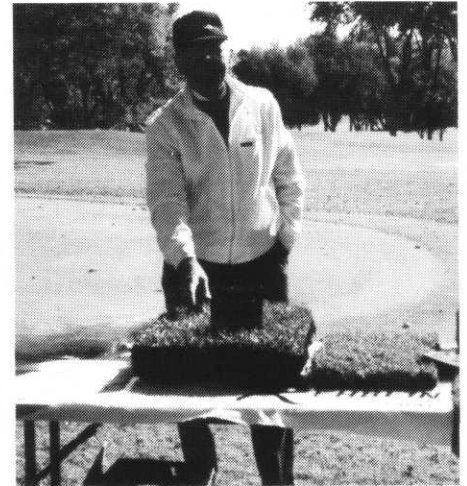


Intonation

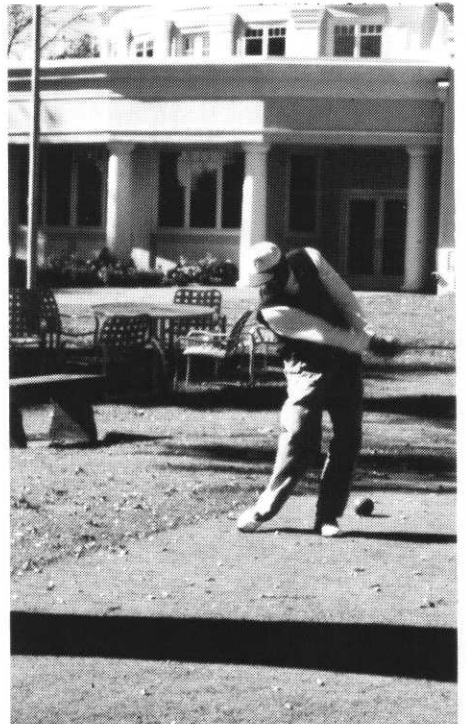
Intonation is the final element in voice language. Your intonation wraps up pitch, loudness and pause into a total package that conveys your message with authority. If a speaker ends each sentence with an upward inflection, we get a picture of someone who is insecure or not confident. It makes us question what's being said.

Use intonation that reflects your inner feelings to give strength to what you're saying and to the image you leave with your listeners.

There is a standard in vocal language that can get you what you want. Your sound strategy is to develop a tone that's appropriate to the goals you're trying to achieve. Consciously choose a strategy for your sound, and change that sound by employing variables of pitch, volume, pause and intonation.



JOE CHECK displays his turf tools on some of Glen Rehbein's washed sod.



BRUCE LELAND, Continental Turf, playing Minneapolis Golf Club's tenth hole from the tips.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

NEW MEMBERS—OCTOBER 10, 1994

	Class
Patrick Anderson Dellwood Hill G.C. D	
3378 Auger Ave., White Bear Lake, MN 55110	W: 612/426-4406
Greg Christian The Wilds Golf Club A	
1301 W. 143rd, #207, Burnsville, MN 55306	W: 612/445-4455
Darryl DeGrio Rich Acres Golf Course C	
5925 12th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55417	W: 612/861-9349
Joseph Dinnebie Pine Ridge Golf Club BII	
405 West Broadway, Little Falls, MN 56345	W: 218/575-3300
Andrew Dumas Crystal Lake Golf Course BII	
15201 Greenhaven Dr., #115, Burnsville, MN 55306	W: 612/953-3656
John W. Hamblet, Jr. Lakeview Golf Course D	
2720 Ethel Ave., Wayzata, MN 55391	W: 612/472-7546
Kevin Iverson Anoka Hennepin Tech. College . . . C	
1939 Silverbell Rd., #104, Eagan, MN 55122	H: 612/688-8528
Kevin Loftness Turf Enhancement E	
RR 1, Box 115, Hector, MN 55342	W: 612/848-6441
Thomas J. Melcher Tri-State Pump & Control, Inc. . . F	
805 Tower Drive, Medina, MN 55340	W: 612/478-2000
Christian Norton Lakeview Golf Course BII	
710 North Shore Dr., Mound, MN 55364	W: 612/472-7546
Curt Pickar 3M Club of St. Paul/Tartan Park . . BII	
11512 Dale Rd., Woodberry, MN 55125	W: 612/733-3472
Joel Schuman Anoka Hennepin Tech. College . . . C	
13450 Arrowood Ln., Dayton, MN 55327	H: 612/427-8598
Mick Twito Crystal Lake Golf Club BII	
16725 Innsbrook Dr., Lakeville, MN 55044	W: 612/953-3656

RECLASSIFICATION—OCTOBER 10, 1994

John F. Betchwars Creeks Bend Golf Course D to BII
David Longville White Bear Yacht Club BII to B
Thomas Schmidt Perham Lakeside C.C. C to BII

Dick Grundstrom, Membership Chairman