

Your Tone Of Voice Affects How People Respond To You

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When customers hear your voice on the other end of the line, they imagine the person behind the voice. If they like what they hear in the voice, chances are they will perceive you as knowledgeable and confident. If they don't like your voice, it makes them want to disconnect or speak to a supervisor. Your voice is your best vehicle for making the customer trust you.

To **exceed** customer expectations, your voice must consistently sound

- Upbeat
- Warm
- Under control
- Clear.

Understanding your voice

All of us are born with a particular voice. It is our trademark. Most of us do not have a radio announcer's voice. However, unless there is a congenital defect, any voice can be improved by pausing and breathing.

To improve the tone of your voice:

1. Make sure you are breathing from the diaphragm. Many people are shallow breathers. This can cause the voice to sound strident.
2. Drink lots of water to keep the voice sounding pleasant all day long. The ordinary person uses up a quart of water an hour. When you talk all day long on the phone, it is important to keep the vocal cords lubricated.
3. Avoid caffeine. It is a diuretic.

4. Sit up straight. Posture does affect breathing.
5. Use gestures to make your voice sound energetic. It is especially important to use gestures when you are tired. They will give your voice additional power and will help you to emphasize words or phrases to get your point across.
6. You automatically warm up the tone of your voice when you smile. Your customers will notice the difference. Keep a mirror on your desk and notice if you are smiling while talking.
7. If your voice is particularly high or low, exercise the range of your voice by doing a sliding scale. You can also expand the range of your voice by singing.
8. Tape record your voice and play it back. Would this be a voice that says, "I care?"
9. Practice speaking at a slightly lower octave. Deeper voices have more credibility than higher pitched voices. It will take getting used to pitching your voice down an octave, but it will be worth the effort. It is also what on-air radio personalities have had to learn to do.
10. Get feedback on the tone of your voice. Ask your manager or a trusted friend.

Your voice sells people on your knowledge level and professionalism. It helps you to gain their support when difficulties arise. Make it sound the best it can by pausing and breathing and by maintaining it with good posture, big gestures and plenty of water.

Impact Communications, Inc. consults with individuals and businesses to improve their face-to-face and over the phone communication skills. It is not what you know but how you communicate it that makes a difference. To reach us, phone (847) 438-4480 or contact our web site, www.ImpactCommunicationsInc.com.