

Learn More in 30 Minutes!

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Voice and Personality

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Learn More in 30 Minutes!

This book has been designed so that you can absorb concise and well-founded information in a short amount of time. A guidance system leads you through the book. It allows you to grasp the essentials within your personal time frame—from 10 to 30 minutes.

Short Reading Time

You can read the entire book in 30 minutes. If you have less time, focus specifically on the sections that contain information relevant to you.

- Key questions with page references at the beginning of each chapter allow for quick orientation: You can turn directly to the page that fills your knowledge gap.
- **Numerous summaries within the chapters allow for quick scanning.**
- A Fast Reader at the end of the book summarizes all key aspects.
- An index makes it easier to look things up.

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Why do we hear our voice differently than it actually sounds?

Chapter 1.1

Why is it important to speak well?

Chapter 1.2

What mindset do you need for a strong presence?

Chapter 1.3

1. Those Who Speak Get Ahead

A scientist I know conducted research for a year and achieved strong results. Her colleague was only minimally involved in the project. When it came time to present, she got cold feet and said to him, “Why don’t you do it?” He presented—and the results were well received. When it came time to extend the project, the professor told her he didn’t even know what she had contributed and that he would continue working with her colleague. She was speechless.

Clients often come to me and say, “In meetings, I don’t even know what to say. Everything has already been said. And I don’t really have much more to add.” I then tell them: “Be careful. Because the one who speaks is the one who gets seen. Especially in groups of men, it’s often important that everyone says something. If you stay silent, you’re not really in the room. **Only those who speak get ahead.** So go ahead and summarize things again in your own words.”

Speak with a strong, steady voice. You might think you’re speaking too loudly—but chances are, you’re simply present in the room. You’ll find out why that is now.

1.1 Self-Perception and External Perception

When we hear our own voice—for example, on voicemail—it sounds unfamiliar to us. Why is that?

We hear ourselves from the inside. **That means we perceive our own voice very differently from how it actually sounds to others.**

You can try the following exercise:



Exercise 1: Blocking the Ears

Hold your hands perpendicular to your ears, with your pinky fingers against your cheeks and your fingers closed. Now say loudly out into the room: “Today the sun is shining.”



This is how your voice sounds in the room, and this is how other people hear you. Surprised? Be aware that there is a discrepancy between self-perception and external perception. It may be that you think you are speaking loudly, but outwardly you sound quiet. With this exercise, you can do your personal sound check before a presentation if you are speaking without a microphone. You are doing two things at once: You are speaking outward and projecting the sound, but more on that later.

Your voice shows your personality. If you are too quiet, then you are hiding, and the listeners do not perceive you in your strength and in your full potential. If you speak too forcefully, then you roll right over your audience. If you do not open your mouth, then perhaps you do not want to say the words. If you speak with too much pressure because your topic matters to you, you run the risk of pushing your

audience away. If you sound smacky, your mouth is too dry—perhaps you are stressed?

Effective speaking, on the other hand, wins over the ears of your audience for you.

You hear your voice differently from how it sounds in the room. Quiet voices hide; anyone who speaks too forcefully or with too much pressure overwhelms their audience. Your voice shows your personality. With effective speaking, you will be heard.

1.2 Why Voice Training?

Your voice opens doors. We focus on having a good body, train in fat-burning classes, push ourselves in mixed martial arts, and relax in flow yoga. And we do all of this to look good and make an impression. But to complete the overall picture, your voice is essential. **Your voice reaches the other person on an emotional level.** When your voice conveys your personality—when you are in your power—people listen to you. They don't just hear what you say; they perceive you as a whole person.

With this book, you will learn: to speak in your natural speaking tone, to project your voice, to work with pauses and tension, and to speak with energy and presence.

Language connects us. Language is more than the words we speak. **You receive a phone call, and instantly you form**

a picture: gender, age, background, level of education, hair color, temperament, energy level, likability. You may even hear whether the person is lying down, sitting, or standing. It's surprising when you realize that your impression was wrong.

Or imagine listening to a presentation that makes you tired—even though the topic interests you. Perhaps the speaker has mastered the art of monotony and speaks in a largo tempo (veeeeery sloooowly). Sometimes the speaker runs out of breath, speaks in short bursts, or even with a sharp, squeaky tone. That carries over to our own voices—we feel a tightness in our larynx, just like when we instinctively tense up watching someone bite into a lemon. You see: **Unhelpful presentation habits transfer directly to the listeners. It's completely different when a speaker draws you in—someone who speaks with engagement, passion, and energy.** Whose breath supports the voice and who speaks in their natural speaking tone (not too high and not too low). Then we feel comfortable listening. We are captivated by that person.

With your voice, you reach the other person emotionally. Straining your voice can cause physical discomfort in your listeners. We enjoy listening to speakers who do not speak too high or too low and who have enough breath while speaking.

1.3 Your Mindset

There are certain criteria for what a strong presence should look like: upright posture, steady eye contact, chest out, stomach in, dynamic movement. If you create this posture from the outside, it lasts about 30 seconds. Then you have to remind yourself again—otherwise you collapse back into yourself. It's different when you work from the inside out: **With the right thought, you stand upright, maintain eye contact, and carry yourself with energy.** I love being on stage—but with the “wrong” thought, even I can't perform with confidence.

So what is the supportive thought? To understand what a helpful thought is, let's first look at a few that tend to get in the way: They all have one thing in common: The speaker is viewing themselves from the audience's perspective. You hear your inner voice saying: “Everyone is looking at me,” “Everyone is expecting something from me,” or “Everyone is thinking, what on earth does this person have to say to me?” With these thoughts, you are not centered in yourself—you are sitting in the audience, watching yourself from the outside. That's fatal. That's the sure path to failure. Even I can't perform confidently with a thought like that. Why? Because they are passive sentences.

Be the hero of your story. And heroes are active. **That means you need an active verb for your mindset—for your core thought. And ideally, your sentence begins with “I.”** There are countless verbs—be creative!

Here are a few examples:

- I see you all!
- I am presenting!
- I'll rock the house!

Why? The hero who is supposed to slay the Jabberwock will never even make it out of the city gate if they think: "Everyone expects me to kill the dragon." But if they say: "I will kill the dragon," then the hero can set out, slay the dragon, return—and marry the prince or princess. The right thought rolls out the red carpet for you—the wrong thought pulls the rug out from under your feet. Conclusion: **Our thoughts influence our body—and our posture influences our thoughts.**

Amy Cuddy has shown in her experiment on power posing that holding expansive poses above the level of the heart increases testosterone levels and lowers cortisol levels. With low-power posing (e.g., collapsing into yourself in a chair), the opposite happens. Testosterone is the hormone of action—you need it for the stage. It helps you take action. You can always approach this from two sides: from the outside—with power posing—and/or from the inside with your mindset.

Only those who speak are heard in professional life. Those who speak well are listened to well.

- **Your voice sounds different from how you hear it, because we hear ourselves “from the inside.”**
- **Your voice is an expression of your personality and reveals what you think.**