

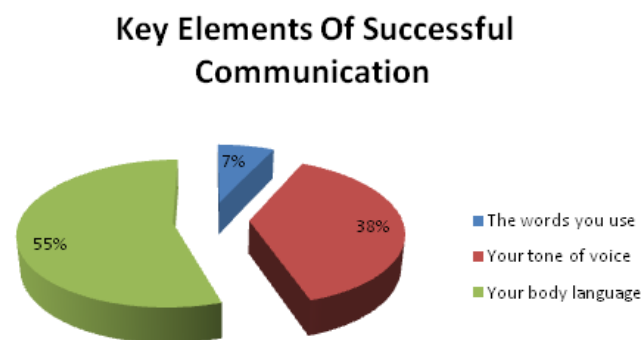
Learning & Development - Presenting

WHY	<p>This course is aiming at making you/your team members more confident when presenting, whether the setting be formal or not. As we have now entered a new era where social distance means we conduct many more meetings via our laptops, reducing greatly the impact of our body language on our communication, this short course will focus exclusively on tone of voice.</p>
WHO	<p>Audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitality professionals of all levels - Anyone curious about self-management <p>Facilitator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-learning - Managers of all levels
WHAT	<p>Content includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why tone of voice is that important - Tips to control and improve it - What is it good for? <p>Content length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately 30 minutes in this section
HOW	<p>1st Read content and select what you believe to be useful for you/your team 2nd Decide what element you/your team will apply and make a plan 3rd Set a deadline for application to be reviewed 4th Review results, amend methods according to specific needs and apply again until satisfied</p>
PLUS	<p>External resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who better than Harvard Professor Amy Cuddy can share tips for successful public speaking

Tone of voice: why you should get it right

As far back as 1967, Albert Mehrabian came up with the concept determining that successful communication is made up of three parts: the words you use, your tone of voice and your body language.

As customers are unable to see your body language when speaking to you on the phone, your tone of voice is the **major** contributor when communicating successfully on the phone. If you remove body language from the equation, then words make up 16% of the 'message' you are giving to customers on the phone, and your tone of voice makes up a whopping **84%**! It is equally as important when attending or presenting in a skype meeting, as most your body is not visible, and movement far less perceptible.



Albert Mehrabian (1967)

Your tone of voice has the biggest influence on whether customers think you are on their side or not – a crucial pre requisite to good customer service. Your tone of voice is also an expression of a company's values and way of thinking, so it's not to be considered lightly. Just as the tone of a colleague's voice when speaking can hurt your feelings, the wrong tone of voice can also upset customers.

It tells people who you are, what to expect from you and your business

Your tone of voice gives you the opportunity to advertise your best self and to be an ambassador for your brand. If customers hear a consistently warm and friendly tone over the phone, it helps to build a positive image of the brand.

So what exactly do we mean by tone of voice?

Tone of voice is the way words or a statement are presented, and it can affect how people respond to those words. Tone is affected by the timbre, (high or low pitched), rhythm, speed of speaking and loudness. Tone of voice conveys a number of things, including mood and emotions. It can also convey social information, such as sarcasm, superiority or submissiveness.

Generally, softer tones are associated with friendliness and are seen as non-aggressive and helpful. Lower tones have become associated with authority and truth, for both men and women. Interestingly, men and women often use higher pitches in first meetings. Subconsciously they are aware this helps establish rapport, as it signals a more upbeat and happy personality!

It is what makes you different

Communicating with interest and enthusiasm can completely impact on how people think about you and your business. If your voice and tone are dull and boring, customers easily slip into thinking your brand might be dull and boring too. Tone of voice can demonstrate your warmth, expertise, sense of humour, or any other attribute that you want to display to customers and which set us apart from other similar businesses.

Customers imagine what the person speaking might be like by listening to their voice. If they like the voice and how it sounds, they tend to believe the person is confident, knowledgeable and credible.

Judith Filek, president of Impact Communications in America, has developed simple tactics to help improve top executives' tone of voice, so they are able to sound more upbeat, controlled, warm and clear. Some of these tactics include breathing from the diaphragm, sitting up straight, drinking more water and using gestures and facial expressions to make the voice sound more energetic and engaging. Good tips for people who spend their working life on the phone!

It helps to build trust

When customers identify with a particular tone of voice, they're also identifying a personality. They start to form an image of a person or company based on the tone of voice you present. Customers feel like they're getting to know the brand or company, bringing with it a sense of trust and familiarity.

A warm tone of voice makes you seem more genuine and your customers feel at ease. That familiarity is comforting, as they then know what to expect from you and trust your advice.

It can be used to influence and persuade

Once you've gained the trust of customers, you can help to influence their decisions in a positive way, to help them make informed choices about how they can experience your brand in a way that will suit them best.

It is also incredibly helpful when dealing with someone who has a problem or a complaint. The tone you use helps build rapport, and breaks down barriers between you and the customer you are trying to help. Being efficient is important, but remember, efficiency without warmth looks a lot like arrogance!

Being aware of your tone of voice is great for your personal brand, (we all love someone with a gorgeous voice.) It also makes good business sense to remember who we are as a company and reflect that in the way we communicate to customers.

External resource – Body language

Amy Cuddy, Associate Professor of Business Administration at Harvard, and internationally acclaimed for her amazing Ted Talk on Power Poses, is giving tips for successful public speaking in the video 'tips for successful public speaking' – see link on the website.