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The Way You Talk Shows The Way You Are

Margaret Buswell
Iowa State College

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A pleasant voice when used correctly can be a stepping stone to your success, says Margaret Buswell. Jane Battey Hoffman and Mrs. Josephine Bakke stop and chat about "Y" activities.



The Way You Talk Shows

The Way You Are

NEXT to the way you look, the way you sound gives the most definite signpost of your personality and temperament. It is essential, therefore, that you give thought to the cultivation of a pleasant speaking voice, just as you spend time choosing becoming clothes.

"Clothes make the man." So say the multitudes. But that statement is no more true than "voice makes the man," says Edward Wegener, of the Department of English and Speech.

This is important, says Wegener, because when you get out in the world and have something to sell, whether it's yourself, material goods or ideas, your voice is your salesmanship, good or bad. Your speech habits are an index to your ability. People judge you by the way you talk.

"Little Girl" Voice

The average woman is guilty of one of four common vocal deficiencies. *Oral resonance* is one of the greatest. This quality can best be described as the "little girl" voice, babyish or immature. Instead of fully utilizing the entire vocal equipment, diaphragm, lungs, larynx or voice box, tongue and lips, many women restrict their voices to the front part of their throat and mouth.

A large percentage have an unpleasant *whine* in their voices. This develops especially as women grow older. Still others develop an *over dominant quality*, noticeable among women who work with and compete in a man's business world.

The deficiency most noticed in women's speech is the *limited pitch range*. A woman's voice is naturally an octave or so higher than that of a man. If she exercises but a narrow expanse of her potential pitch range, her voice is dull and unstimulating. The irritating shrill voice is the result of this limited range being confined to the higher notes.

Wegener suggests that you find your range on the

piano by striking your own comfortable high and low notes. Then practice using that entire range in reading aloud to anyone who will listen, or to yourself. Poetry is excellent reading copy. This takes work, but the results are well worth the effort and time.

Relaxed Throat

The greatest asset, Wegener continues, is a relaxed throat. The tension should be in the diaphragm, where the air is first started on its way into the voice box, and in the lips and tongue where the sound is formed into audible words.

To relax your throat, take a deep breath, start a yawn and end it with singing out a full round "ah." This "ah" will come naturally; there is no need for force. Prolong the tone until you feel the vibration in your head and chest. Then close your mouth and let the "m" sound continue through your nose.

Radio and movies are an excellent source of models for you to imitate. Forget the story occasionally and notice the speakers. Study them. Decide why they impress you or why they do not.

Movie and radio model speakers suggested by Dr. Bender include Clare Booth Luce, who with Mme. Chiang Kai-shek has been nominated one of the outstanding feminine orators in the English language. Others are Hedy Lamarr, Shirley Temple, Katharine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall, Adelaide Hawley. Jennifer Jones possesses what nostalgic Pacific war veterans describe as a soothing voice.

Well-timed Phrasing

Articulation is important. Talking too fast and running words together, failure to observe punctuation, pauses and emphasis are common stumbling blocks here. The late Franklin D. Roosevelt is cited often for his well-timed phrasing.

Add to your keys to success, then, not only looking your best, but sounding your best.