

# VOCAL INTELLIGENCE

## Vocal Intelligence - authenticity

Vocal Intelligence evolved from the combination of two key construct domains:

- the *vocal component* refers to the mobilisation and expression of energy, emotion and personal presence through engagement with vocal processes.
- the *intelligence component* refers to the creating, evaluating and choosing among options for the authentic and effective expression of self.

## Non- verbal studies - perception

'Non-verbal studies' hold the study of perception as a critical focal point; indeed, the entire concern with voice is devoid of change possibility, authenticity or relational interaction and is based solely on auditory recognition.

The *attractive voice* is defined as sounding: 'more articulate, lower in pitch, higher in pitch range, low in squeakiness, non-monotonous, appropriately loud and resonant' (Zuckerman, Hodgins & Miyake 1990).

People with attractive voices, in turn, are seen to 'have greater power, competence, warmth and honesty attributed to them. People with 'babyish' voices are usually perceived to be less powerful and less competent but warmer and more honest than people with mature, sounding voices' (Berry, D. S. 1992).

We are told that standard dialects tend to enhance *credibility* in formal settings, whereas ethnic and in-group **dialects** are preferable in informal contexts, such as home and bars. Moreover, when the degree of accent is an important consideration for stereotyping and categorising people, the more intense the accent, the more negative the impact on credibility (Street & Hopper 1982), such that consistently mispronounced words may impair a speaker's credibility and communicative effectiveness.

Perceived *competence* is said to increase as speaking rate increases (Scherer, London & Wolf 1973), although there is a point at which speaking rate becomes so fast as to have a negative effect on competence. There is, however, 'no current consensus on what that rate is' (Siegman 1987).

The *confident* voice is apparently substantial, but not excessive in volume, a rather rapid speaking rate, expressiveness and fluency. Stuttering, 'ah', incomplete sentences and tongue slips are, in the mind of the perceiver, strongly associated with high levels of anxiety (Jurich & Jurich 1974). Dominant and powerful individuals 'exhibit speech that is relatively free from hesitation and hedges, but these vocal phenomena are characteristic of the speech of submissive and low-power people' (Hosman 1989).

*Encoder → Decoder*

# KEY PRINCIPLES OF VOCAL INTELLIGENCE

<b>Philosophy</b>
All people are born with perfect instruments: Every healthy person begins with the potential to express, through voice, an enormous range of feelings and thoughts, which are a reflection of who they are in the greater context of the universe, an enormously intertwined phenomenon, which brings the full connection of body and the inextricable connection of mind.
Each voice is unique: We all have a fundamental frequency specific to us
All people possess the phylogenic disposition to sing: Singing is not an extension of speech. Speech is a diminution of song
Voice is a complex phenomenon. It is a product (sound) which is invisible, made from a place of the body we can not see (larynx) or sometimes feel, linked to both emotional and physical responses, with an output we hear differently to those around us.
Vocal dynamics echo psychodynamics: Voice is a reflection of self. Voice is a reflection of body which is a reflection of mind. There is no vocal change without personal change

<b>Beyond the personal</b>
There is a cumulative vocal tendency which is a reflection of our culture
Organizational culture is a particularly divisive culture for voice: If western culture is a psychic prison, the organizational culture is a solitary confinement.

<b>Philosophies of change</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocal and emotional capacity and expression cannot be ‘taught’, but they can be ‘released’</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocal perception does not match reality</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice is a kinaesthetic experience first and foremost</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no right or wrong answers or methods, only personal insights</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No single path will suffice</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manipulating personal sound offers the opportunity to deal with habitually poor body and mind patterning, which is a result of the way we use that energy to present ourselves in the world.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of the jigsaw of independent, interdependent, hierarchical and necessary elements of voice, breath is the keystone for all vocal work, for which posture is the foundation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding your voice is understanding your personal journey</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any pedagogy for the development of vocal intelligence must recognise the intricate connection of duality such as the emotional and rational brain, the effect of left and right brain hemispheres, and the extent of unconscious and autonomic functioning as well as conscious processes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is impossible to teach yourself to sing – we do not hear ourselves as others do. Work on voice is, therefore, by nature, sometimes directive</li> </ul>

