

Voice Training - Introductory Course

Aim

The course aims to improve the fluency and comprehension of the spoken word in broadcasting, especially when being read from a script, but also *ad lib*.

Who For?

Anyone involved in speaking on-air - although especially those using scripts, such as news and sport broadcasters, but also programme presenters (who may have to use scripts from time to time - be they weather, travel, competitions, trailers for shows etc) The course works best with a maximum of six delegates.

Duration

3 hours, with a ten to fifteen minute break half way through.

Outline

- The course begins with an interactive demonstration of the part that emphasis plays in ordinary conversational speech and an indication of how it can be as useful in conveying meaning as the individual words used.
- With the previous activity in mind, students are then asked to read from prepared scripts - either written by themselves or supplied by the tutor - to demonstrate some common pitfalls that tend to occur when words are being read out loud. These can be news, sport, or commercial voiceover scripts, chosen to best reflect the sort of material they each student might face as part of his or her working life.
- A brief analysis is then given of the readings, explaining the positive and negative aspects of each. As well as stress and emphasis, typical subject matter covered includes pace, pitch, and inflection, the need to say rather than shout, as well as the way in which some words are pronounced in a careful and distinct manner, whilst other words tend to flow into one another. Students are then encouraged to try this new approach to the same scripts, to experience how a different reading can lead to better results.
- After a short break, a focus is put on the reduced vowel sound 'schwa' and how an understanding of it can help make reading clearer and more fluent; and how comprehension is positively hampered by failure to recognise where and when it can be used. Again, practical examples are given.
- Ultimately, the course highlights the patterns of conversational speech, and attempts to recreate them on the radio, allowing what is said or read to sound as clear, natural and unaffected as possible, leading to the final dictum: 'don't read the words, say the meaning!'

Trainer

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