

USING YOUR VOICE

The telephone system transmits the voice by an electronic system. However good the present system may be, the fact remains that the full frequency range of the human voice is partially lost through the transmission process. The loss of frequency makes the voice sound '**flatter**' than normal with a subsequent loss of inflection and meaning. Without the visual image of your face to help understanding, the receiver of the call may have difficulty interpreting your exact meaning.

To replace what the telephone system takes away you have to be much more careful with your voice and the choice of words.

Developing a good telephone voice needs care and attention to the following:-

1. Cleanness of Speech

The three ingredients of clear speech are diction, pronunciation and breathing. It is best to speak deliberately and slower than normal. Hold the hand piece about two or three inches from the mouth and speak across the mouthpiece, not directly into it.

2. Voice Control

To give '**colour**' to your voice, six variables are important. They are:

- a) Variations in volume
- b) Variations in speed
- c) Inflection
- d) Modulation
- e) Pausing
- f) Tone



Skillful use of the voice means learning to use the variables to create exactly the right feel to your voice. The limitations of the telephone system can be overcome by practice, using your voice to convey moods, attitudes and meanings.

Pausing presents special problems; a ten second silence on the telephone will almost certainly provoke the question "**are you still there?**" Whereas during face to face meetings facial expressions give clues to how the conversation is going, on the telephone you have to rely on voice alone.

Verbal expressions are required to give both parties the missing facial messages.

3. Using words

Simple words and easy to understand sentences are the golden rules for good telephone communication. Try to avoid unnecessary **JARGON, SLANG and COLLOQUIALISMS**. This is particularly true when talking to someone from another part of the country, who may not understand your local expressions.

POSITIVE LANGUAGE

The use of words is very important over the phone.

Examples of negative and positive words in a statement are as follows (positive alternative is in brackets):

“We **cannot** deliver for three weeks. We **haven’t** got enough resources at the moment.”

(“We **pride** ourselves on our **efficiency** and we **can guarantee** delivery **within** three weeks for **you**.”)

“Please do **not hesitate** to contact me” (“please contact me if you have any queries”)

“**Just bare** with me” (“one moment please whilst I bring your details up on our system”)

“**But** it is **not possible** to deliver for three weeks” (“**however** we **can** deliver **within** three weeks for **you**”)

