

USEFUL RESOURCES

Portable vocal warm up

If you are giving a presentation or a pitch it's vital that you prepare to speak clearly. Doing a short vocal warm up before speaking will help you to manage your nerves and ensure that all the brilliant things you have to say can be heard by everyone. Practise these short exercises, designed for you by a professional voice coach, regularly and you'll soon be a clear, confident and inspiring public speaker.

IN YOUR BEDROOM

- Stretch out your neck, arms and legs and give them a little shake
- Stand with your feet parallel, just wider apart than your hips, drop your head and let the weight of it pull down towards the ground, rolling the spine down. Let your arms hang heavy. Keep your knees unlocked
- Once you're hanging over from your waist, wobble your head to make sure it's loose, and let your arms swing gently
- Imagine the vertebrae of your spine stacking back up one by one, pulling your torso up through a gentle curve, and then let your neck and head float upright at the top. Arms hang heavy throughout
- Repeat these four steps a couple of times, keep the pace nice and steady and enjoy the feeling of your head floating at the top. Try imagining a golden thread pulling gently up from the top of your head and everything finding a balanced place beneath it
- Knees unlocked, feet planted, weight evenly shared between them
- Squeeze your shoulders up to your ears, hold for a count of eight and then let them drop
- Repeat, tighter squeeze, heavier drop. Repeat again
- Now just lift your shoulders an inch, count eight and drop. Try and feel the difference that even that little bit of tension creates, and how much better it feels once it's gone
- Breathe out steadily and silently to empty your lungs, let the body take over to refill them

IN THE SHOWER

- When you wash your face, make sure you give all the muscles a good massage, especially around your lips and cheeks
- Unfurl your ears, starting at the top and working round to your earlobes
- Hum hum hum. Long notes, up and down through your range or your favourite power ballad; just make sure you can feel the sound buzzing on the front of your lips and in your chest
- Beatbox, getting faster and faster and making sure you play all the drums and cymbals

IN THE WAITING ROOM/A QUIET PLACE BEFORE YOUR PRESENTATION

- Keep the image of the golden thread at the top of your head gently pulling you up, even sitting down
- Have a little shake out, lift and drop your shoulders
- Yawn widely (without looking like you're telling people that you're bored) to stretch your face muscles again
- Run your tongue round in a circle clockwise between your teeth and your lips four times, then back the other way (perhaps with a hand over your mouth)
- Steadily blow all the air out of your lungs, either silently or on a 'ssssh', then let your body take over and refill them. Repeat a few times
- Unfurl your ears again

JUST BEFORE YOU SPEAK

- Check the golden thread
- Feet in parallel, hip width apart, knees unlocked
- Drop your shoulders
- Breathe out steadily and silently to empty your lungs, and let the body take over to refill them