

VOCAL IMPACT

Pace Exercise

To get an idea of your natural pace, read the following passage out loud. (150 words).
If you finish it less than 60 seconds, you are speaking too quickly for many situations.
Try it again, this time slowing down and inserting longer pauses until you fill 60 seconds
- this is a good pace for most listeners.

'Variety is one of the best and most effective ways of making your voice interesting and engaging. Aim to do this in as many ways possible. Speed up to express enthusiasm and excitement (the actor Robin Williams was an extreme example of this in action). Slow down when you want to say something serious (think of Nelson Mandela and the gravitas he created). Reduce your voice to a whisper, as if you are sharing a secret with a friend, and increase the volume when you want to emphasise an important point. If you simply make this small change you will improve your voice enormously. One of the easiest ways to do it is by letting your passion for the topics you are talking about guide the way you speak. When you care about the subject you naturally adapt your voice to convey the emotion you feel about it.'

Of course it isn't always appropriate to speak at 150wpm. Variety of pace will depend on the situation and the point that you want to get across.

Speed up if you want to add energy and enthusiasm; slow down to emphasise an important point.