



## Vocal Strength Development Exercises

### *Business Presentation Mastery Module 5*

#### **Vocal Strength Exercises – Breath support with vocalizations**

Different sounds need different amounts of air. You can use these sounds as practice to improve your vocal stamina. Just like in the previous exercises, always inhale from the bottom up and exhale from the top down - like a jug filling up with water and then pouring it out.

- Fully vocalize these sounds, giving them plenty of air, strength, and volume (but don't yell!). Don't sacrifice strength or volume just to try to get them to last longer.
  - Always start your sound with your lungs comfortably full of air. Start with strength.
  - Stop making the sound when you feel like your abs and core are working just a little *too* hard, or when you can hear and feel your voice begin to waver or your abs and core muscles start to strain.
  - If you like, you can pick a length of time you want to inhale for and then vocalize the sound for. eg: inhale for a count of 3, exhale while saying "aaaah" for a count of 10.
- 1) Inhale until you have a comfortable amount of air – approximately a count of 3. Exhale while making a 'sssss' noise for as long as you are able without your voice becoming weak or you needing to squeeze that sound out by working too hard through your core. As soon as you feel your abs engage, cut that sound off nice and sharply. Don't let your voice trail off.
  - 2) Now we do it again Inhale until you have a comfortable amount of air – approximately a count of 3. Exhale while making an "mmmm" noise for as long as you are able without your voice becoming weak or straining. Again, you DON'T want to let your voice trail off, so cut off that sound nice and sharply before you lose that reserve of air.
  - 3) Now one more time, this with an AAAAAh sound. Breathe in comfortably, let that sound ring out....and cut it off before you lose vocal strength or support.

## Vocal Strength and Core Support Exercises

- **Visualization** – When speaking picture yourself placing your voice at different distances from yourself. For example, speak so that your voice “reaches” your outstretched hand. Then, speak with enough volume or support until it “reaches” a table or object several feet away from you. Then, speak again so that your voice “reaches the furthest wall in the room. Play around with your core support and engagement when doing this. Avoid straining through your throat or larynx – keep the power coming from your abdominal muscles.
- **Chair hold** – To engage your core, speak or read out loud while holding a chair or box in front of you with your elbows held against your ribs and bent at a 90 degree angle. Do NOT allow the chair or box to rest on any part of your body. You should feel your abdominal muscles engage.
- **Wall push** – Stand close to a wall. Place your palms flat against the wall and position yourself so that your elbows are at your sides and bent at a 90 degree angle. Position your feet shoulder width apart and slightly staggered to give you a good base of support. Then, speak or read something out loud while pushing firmly against the wall but NOT allowing your elbows to straighten. Focus on pushing the wall away from you instead of pushing yourself away from the wall. You should get good abdominal engagement doing this. An alternative (but more difficult) variation is to speak or read out loud while holding a plank position on the floor.
- **With both the chair hold and the wall push:**
  - Once you get the “feel” of speaking with good core engagement, you can put down the chair or move away from the wall, and continue speaking while still engaging your abs. If you start to feel yourself losing vocal power or abdominal engagement, return to the wall or pick up the chair again.
  - Because you will be using more abdominal engagement than you normally will, you will need to breathe more often. That’s fine – breathe as often as you need to in order to maintain good volume and support. When you are speaking without holding those positions, you won’t be engaging your abdominal muscle quite so strongly and will be able to breathe a little more fully.