

Call Handling Skills Controlling Your Voice

Your voice is the greatest customer service – and sales – tool available.

Warmth, empathy, and confidence help prospects feel reassured.

Conversely, sounding rote, automated, uncaring or preoccupied creates the perception the service will be cold. Prospects won't hesitate to call your competitor.

It is vital to know how to control your voice while speaking to prospective clients.

Importance of Controlling Your Voice

Marketing dollars were spent to make the phones ring. If an appointment is not set, client acquisition costs become more expensive.

Call handlers play a vital role in client acquisition and helping grow businesses. Call handlers are the first

person perspective clients connect with and the first impression of the business.

Making sure that impression is positive starts with your tone of voice.

Non-Verbal Communication

Communication includes more than just vocal expression. Non-verbal communication plays a big role in conversations. Sending and receiving messages without the use of verbal codes (words) happens both intentionally and unintentionally.

Non-Verbal Communication Includes:

- Touch
- Eye contact
- Volume
- Vocal nuance
- Syntax (the words chosen to use)
- Facial Expression
- Tone of voice
- Proximity
- Posture
- Paralanguage (laugh, yawn, saying “umm” during the conversation)

Since non-verbal communication is a part of all communication, a message is not 100% made up of simply the words spoken. Communication is:

- 7% words
- 38% vocal elements
- 55% non-verbal elements (body language)

Your message is conveyed through your body language. Even over the phone, this remains true.

How can non-verbal communication occur when you cannot see the other person? Body language is absorbed into the tone of voice. Each gesture affects the way sounds come out of our mouths.

For example, it is easy to tell if somebody is laying back, smiling or frowning while on the phone, even if you cannot see the person. Posture affects the tone of voice. Listen back to your calls, can you tell if you sound tired or enthusiastic on the phone?

Reviewing Calls

When reviewing your calls, if you hear that you sound quiet or timid on the phone, try standing while on calls so that your voice projects more and you sound more confident.

If you sound tired or irritated, pay attention to posture and don't slump over the desk. And always have a smile. You will notice how simple changes in body language will be noticed over the phone as well. Try to speak as if you are speaking to the person face-to-face.



By utilizing CallSource's Telephone Performance Analysis Report or Employee Performance Report, you can listen to your own calls and see how well you did on specific calls, or where there is room for improvement.

Tone of Voice

It is not just what you say on the phone that counts, but how you say it. The tone of your voice is one of the most important elements of telephone communication. Tone is made up of a few components:

- **Inflection:** Which words or syllables you emphasize
- **Pitch:** The frequency of sound
- **Pace:** The number of words spoken in a given period of time
- **Volume:** The amount of sound produced

Try This

All of these elements put together affect the meaning of your message. Below is an example of how tone can affect the meaning of a sentence. In this example, emphasize the first word in this sentence with added volume. Continue repeating the sentence, each time emphasizing the underlined word.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

Somebody else told her.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I emphatically did not tell her.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I implied it.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I told someone else.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I told her someone else was wrong.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I told her you're still wrong.

I didn't tell her you were wrong.

I told her something else about you.

Depending on how you vary these vocal elements, a sentence can have any of several meanings. The tone of your voice can change the context of a conversation and can be the difference between setting an appointment or a missed opportunity.

Controlling Your Voice

Adjusting the tone of your voice increases success when speaking with prospects. If you are monotone, your caller may begin to lose interest. If your tone is dull, your caller may think you are bored or distracted. Short responses create an aggressive tone.

Variety is the key to keeping callers engaged. Change the pace and pitch throughout the conversation, and try to match it to the caller's pace and tone. Otherwise, you may have a scripted sound. By applying variety, the conversation sounds more involved and natural.

Make sure your tone matches the importance of the conversation. The prospect is calling because they have a problem – you need to show that you are a solution.

If a caller sounds frustrated, empathize with them and reassure them of help. Use these tells to help your conversations be more conducive for the caller.

Confidence

Sound confident when speaking with prospects. You are the expert. The prospective customer expects your expertise. They have a problem in need of a solution.

Sounding unsure or unconfident in responses leaves the caller less likely to set an appointment. When giving the caller information, say it with authority. Confidence will be reflected in how you speak.

Keep a list of frequently asked question, value statements, or anything else that the entire staff should know. This way, there will be less stumbling or lead to less nervousness if the caller asks one of those questions.

If the caller does ask a question that you are unsure of the answer to, use definitive actions such as "I'll find out" instead. Confidence is key.

Put yourself in the caller's shoes and shape your attitude accordingly. Reassure the caller you can help. This reiterates to the caller that they have called the right place.

Just like technicians have tools to help get the job done, your voice is a tool to help set the appointment.

- Sit up straight
- Smile
- Adjust your tone to the situation
- Sound confident
- Avoid negative language