



Vocal Production

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Agenda Topics



- **Know Thyself**
- **Goals for your voice**
- **Inhibitors**
- **Do's**
- **Don'ts**
- **Other Questions**
- **Reference Material**



Know Thyself



You're the expert

- What is the instrument and how do I play it?
- Am I warm now
- Singing in the AM vs PM
- How's your health?
- Styles of individual singing
- Other?



Your Vocal Goals



(Not in order or all topics)

1. Range
2. Quality
3. Solo vs Ensemble
4. Educating yourself (Books, listening, lessons, etc....be creative)
5. Feedback
6. Enjoying the journey
7. Other (Voice Lessons? Coaching?)



Inhibitors



Feedback:

1. How do you get good feedback? Are you looking for affirmation?
2. How do we accept handle feedback in a positive way? (How to accept feedback or defuse internally and not get defensive?)
3. What are our views of performances, voice lessons, contest that might get in the way of enjoying or learning from each vocal experience?
4. Each time we sing we have opportunities to learn / grow
5. Each time we observe others we can learn about singing



DO's



1. Take care of yourself: Get good sleep, eat well, exercise,
2. Hold the instrument with great command and majesty
3. Breathe well (Awesome breath leads to awesome tones!)
4. Sing daily: The more you use the voice the more consistent / better it gets
5. Compliment / congratulate yourself where appropriate – What did you do well? Be respectful of yourself as if you are the honored guest (We can be hard on ourselves....your mental game is key)
6. State 1-2 things to yourself that were good about your singing after a performance
7. Listen with ears and your eyes to performances... Identify parts of others performance that is good and you'd like to add to your voice
8. Consider what you do in rehearsal to reinforce good vocal production



DON'TS



1. **Forget to tell yourself what you did well in a performance** – *THE MOST important thing in your personal feedback*
2. **Get too upset about making mistakes in performance** – *Really no such thing as a perfect performance*
3. **Singing volumes** – Have fun but don't sing volumes outside of good quality. Repeated singing too loud / shouting will lead to short term and potentially compromising long term vocal health. (It should be easy)
4. **Reaching for notes** - Chin / neck position is important but often overlooked
5. **Coughing** - Folds undulate normally / Coughing slaps them and inflames
6. **Reaching** – Lifting and / lowering - Don't reach for notes with your chin
7. **Sing a lot out of your range** - Vocal tension leads to inflammation and possible damage



Other Questions



1. What's the difference in the character of the sound between medium volumes and the extremes (Soft and loud)?
2. How do we grow the range?
3. How can we grow breath capacity and capability?



Some References....



A Soprano on Her Head: Right-Side-Up Reflections on Life and Other Performances (Paperback) by Eloise Ristad

Inner game of Music – Barry Green

The Structure of Singing: System and Art of Vocal Technique (Paperback) By Richard Miller

How to Train Singers Larra Browning Henderson

Singing for Dummies

Great Singers on Great Singing by Jerome Hines

Indirect Procedures: A Musician's Guide to the Alexander Technique

Body Learning: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique

Speech Level Singing by Seth Riggs

The voice of the mind by E. Herbert-Ceasari – out of print but can find used.



Basics that matter



1. Playing the instrument (Physical stuff - What is the vocal Instrument?)

- Posture / Breathing well:
 - Hold the instrument with great command and majesty
 - Don't reach for notes with your chin
 - Awesome Breath = Awesome Tones!
 - Hydrate (Days in advance of rehearsal or performance)
- Sing freely - (Mental Stuff)
 - "Sing with effortless power not powerful effort".
 - Tongue tension – Monitor / Don't change
 - Reinforcing your image of good vocal production while singing (Vocal heroes?)
- Warm up and Warm Down
 - Smooths out the breaks and set the

2. What time is it? Know when to call it quits for the night

- Monitor the instrument for fatigue or dryness



Basics that matter



3. What NOT to do (Avoid)

- Coughing
 - Folds undulate normally / Coughing slaps them and inflames
 - Don't reach for notes with your chin
- Loud Singing (See #5)
 - How do we sing different volumes
 - It should be easy
- Sing a lot out of your range
 - Vocal tension leads to inflammation and possible damage.

4. Reaching for notes

- Chin / neck position is important but often overlooked

5. Unfortunate Examples

- No longer singing due to late night tagging or not taking care of themselves