

# ORAL COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

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## PRESENTATION

### THE WORKSHOP

How many times have we heard or used any of the following expressions?

- That's not exactly what I meant...
- I know what I want to say, I just can't figure out how to say it...
- I can't really understand what you mean...
- You did not quite get what I meant...
- I find it hard to explain what I'm thinking...
- I'm afraid to make a fool of myself...

We have not been properly taught how to express ourselves and use speech as a tool for creation. This workshop is built upon the belief that all abilities can be trained. Its aim is to provide professionals for whom communication is a work tool with a set of innovative techniques to maximise their resources, always from a creative and fun point of view, thus turning communication into an art.

As fantastic as an idea can be, it is not enough to just say it out loud;

the way we say things is also a critical factor that can make our message come across clearly and accurately.

Form is as important as content.

Our voice, our body and speech are the instruments available for communication between human beings, and they need to be trained if we want communication to be successful. It is all about working on the specific techniques that will help us make these instruments more perfect, more pleasant and more to the point. We can develop abilities and skills to express our thoughts, make the most of verbal and non-verbal resources for expression, combine them and ultimately polish our speech techniques and build on our spontaneity and self-confidence. How? It's very simple: just by talking and listening to others.

### SPEAKERS

This workshop is designed to share the knowledge, techniques and instruments acquired throughout the speakers' wide experience in several communication-related areas, such as theatre, oral storytelling, pedagogy, psychology, and physical therapy.

Since 1995, the coordinators of this oral communication workshop (available as a free-elective subject at the University of Alicante) have been Josefina Ruiz (Undergraduate Degree in Physical Therapy) and Marisela Romero (Undergraduate Degree in Psychology).

They both belong to CUENTETO, an oral storytelling group based in the Region of Valencia, and they have participated in International Orality festivals in Venezuela, Mexico, Colombia, Cuba and Spain; they have also staged several productions for children and adults. They have both trained with professional actors, radio anchors, writers, improvisation and voice experts, and mime artists.

As trainers, they specialise in oral expression workshops for several target groups where mastering words is key (lawyers, actors, teachers, communicators, businesspeople, etc.), and they give oral storytelling workshops in schools, high schools, universities, social care centres, libraries, and education centres for adults and senior citizens.

### OBJECTIVES

General objectives:

To teach participants how to address an audience and establish effective communication, using a series of techniques and tools that will allow them to know and make the most of their abilities, while at the same time spotting their weakest points so they can be reinforced.

Specific objectives:

- Overcoming stage fright
- Controlling our body and voice
- Learning how to give a structured, coherent speech
- Owning the stage
- Handling the audience
- Learning how to use backup resources

## CONTENTS

- COMMUNICATION
- BODY
- VOICE
- SPEECH
- STAGING
- AUDIENCE

### 1. COMMUNICATION

General elements:

The ingredients of communication

Essential tools in communication

Personal image: what kind of message am I sending?

Rational and irrational fears

In the spotlight: how to handle being the centre of attention

Self-confidence

### 2. BODY

Relaxation and breathing

Stress control

Energy

Rhythm

Non-verbal communication

- Gaze
- Face expression
- Hands
- Movement
- Gestures

### 3. VOICE

Diction

Volume

Intonation

Rhythm and pauses

Intention

### 4. SPEECH

How to prepare a presentation

Objective: entertaining/informing/persuading

Structure: introduction/body/conclusion

Message

Speech duration

Rehearsals

## **5. STAGING**

The audience:

- . Getting the lay of the land
- . Types of audience
- . Different reactions for different audiences
- . Reactions and self-control in front of an audience
- . Catching and keeping our audience's attention
- . Participation

First contact with the space and support elements

Use of space

Improvisation

Effective start, effective end

## **6. METHODS**

This workshop is mainly practical. All contents and proposals will be tested by the students themselves through participation and implication in the exercises.

In order for the participants to analyse their progress in all areas, a survey will be administered at the beginning and the end of the course.

Support materials will be provided to students for each area analysed.

## **7. ADDRESSED TO:**

This workshop is for anyone working in a profession where they address an audience, and therefore need to acquire communication and oral expression skills.

## **8. ASSESSMENT**

Students must attend at least 80% of total course hours.

At the end of the workshop, participants must give a talk or a presentation, where the whole speech preparation process will be assessed. Marks will be simply Pass or Fail.