

The Resonatory System

The resonatory system provides the voice with its distinct quality, and it is why we all sound different from each other. The resonance system is made up of the open spaces within the throat, mouth, and nose, so you can think of this system as an open space.

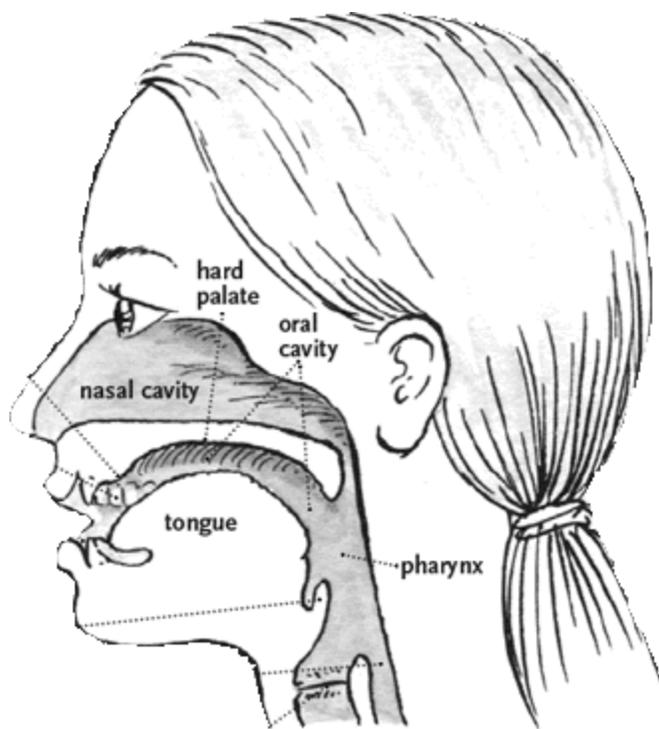
The sound that is made at the vocal cords is only a buzzing sound, and we all sound very similar at this level - it's sort of like a *ppppppp* sound. And as that *ppppppp* sound from the vocal cords bounces around in the open spaces of the resonance system, certain frequencies of the sound are amplified, and other frequencies are dampened, and the result is your unique sounding voice.

When you use your resonatory system to its fullest capability, your voice might sound more...rich...full... warm...pleasant. These are some adjectives that my clients have used to describe how a resonant voice sounds to them.

And once you know how to speak with a resonant voice, your voice should feel effortless, easy, and light. It's a voice that is produced without any tension in the throat or mouth.

Resonatory exercises

- 1) Hum "mmm" on a comfortable pitch. Put your fingers on the bridge of your nose to feel the vibration of your voice. MMMMMMMM. Do you feel it? This vibration is



The shaded areas represent the resonatory system, labeled as "pharynx", "oral cavity", and "nasal cavity".

- 2) a good sign - the more vibration you can achieve, the better. You may also feel vibration along the lips or the front of the face. MMMMMMMM. So as you complete these exercises, remember: The vibration is good! Now put your fingers under your nostrils so you can feel the airflow - you should feel a steady stream of warm air coming out. MMMMMMMM.
 - a) Make sure you relax your throat as you hum. If you tense up your throat, your hum will sound like this: MMMMMM, kind of strained, and you won't have any vibration along the nose or mouth. You also will have very little airflow coming out of your nose. You want a relaxed throat and a buzzy sensation along your nose, lips, and face. MMMMM. And lots of airflow! MMMMM.
- 3) Hum up and down a scale: MMMMMMMMMMMM.
- 4) Hum as low as you can go: MMMMMMMMMMMM.
- 5) Then up as high as you can go: MMMMMMMMMMMM.
- 6) Do this 8 to 10 times, or more, depending on how long it takes for your voice to feel buzzy and relaxed.

After you've done a few scales on a hum, you might find that it is already easier for you to talk. Try it: Hum up and down a scale a few times, with a nice, resonant, easy voice. Feel the buzz along your nose, lips, and face, and make sure you have a good amount of airflow coming out of your nose. MMMMMMMM.

- 7) Now talk. Say, "Hi my name is ____." If you warmed up your resonance system correctly, you'll probably feel that your voice is easy, light, rich, maybe even louder.
- 8) Now let's take the hum one step further. Let's use words that begin with an M sound, like *moon*, and hold out the MMM sound. Mmmmoon. Mmmmmoon. Try to have a buzzy vibration in the nose, lips and front of the face for the entire word - don't let the sound travel to the back of your throat. Keep things forward.
- 9) Now say, *moonman*, and hold out the M and the N sounds. Mmmmoonnnmmmmannnnn. Feel the buzz, keep the sound forward. Moonnnmmmmannnnn.

10) You can continue with this exercise using additional words and phrases that have lots of M and N sounds, and remember to hold out the M and N sounds until you feel a nice vibration along your nose, lips, and front of the face. Here are some examples:

Meet my mom.

Never nap at night.

Mice might make more money.

Meet me at the movies.

Nothing needs to go next.

For more help, contact Julie:

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