

REMEMBER THAT...

An essential way to care for your voice is knowing how to breathe correctly. Diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing will also help us to reduce tension and control stress.

A simple and quick test to know if our breathing is diaphragmatic consists of placing one hand on the chest and another on the stomach. For one minute, breathe normally. Observe your hands, which one of them is moving?

- > If it is the hand that is on the abdomen, you are doing diaphragmatic breathing.
- > If it is the hand that is on the chest, the breathing is pectoral or superficial, meaning less efficient and does not contribute to relaxation.

Practice breathing doing this exercise:

1. **Inhale deeply through the nose trying to move the air towards the lower part of the lungs.** Put one hand on the abdomen to notice how it swells.
2. **Hold the air** for a couple of seconds.
3. **Exhale slowly** relaxing the abdomen and notice how the hand goes down Repeat.



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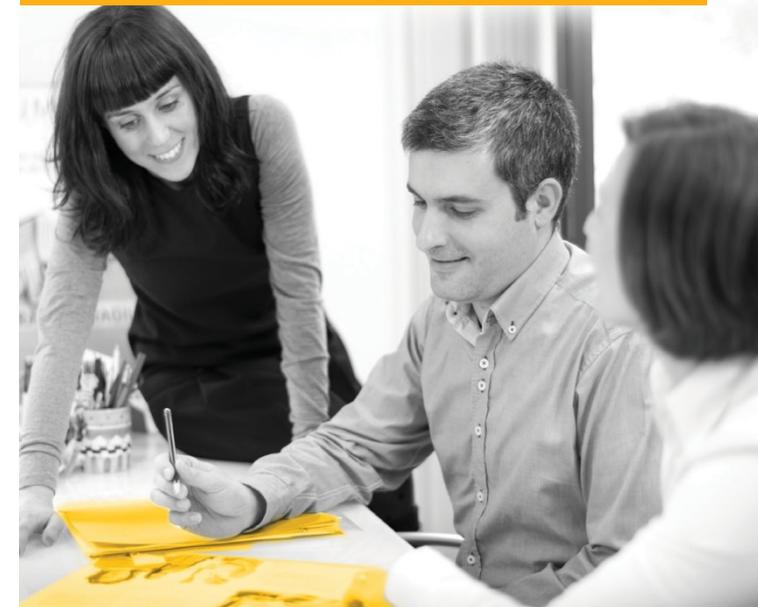
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WE KNOW...

Ergonomics and Applied Psychosociology

TAKE CARE OF YOUR VOICE



The **voice** is one of the main means that a human being has to communicate and, for some professionals such as teachers, telephone operators, customer service staff, public speakers, singers, etc. it becomes their main tool for work.

For that reason, **it is important to look after it** to avoid voice problems or ailments that affect us, not only in a work setting, but in our day-to-day life.

HOW TO PREVENT VOICE PROBLEMS AT WORK?

Some of the **preventive measures that the company can apply** are those related to:

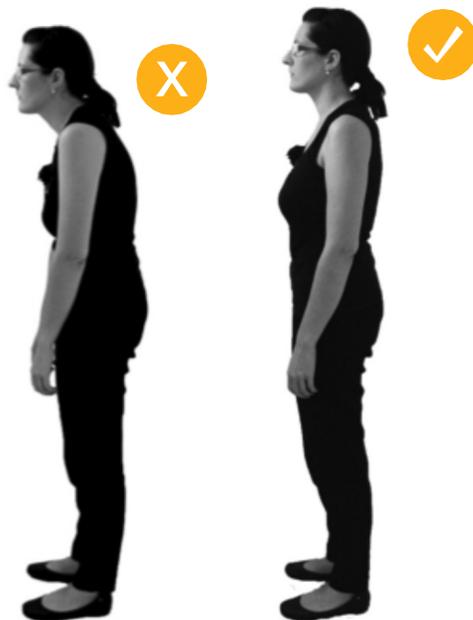
- > The acoustic characteristics of the surroundings: noise control of the environment, compartmentalisation, use of sound insulating materials, etc.
- > Maintain appropriate temperature and humidity conditions. Avoid draughts.
- > Ensure quality of the room air.
- > The organisation of work time: breaks to rest the voice or alternating of tasks.
- > The information and training of the employees, among others.



WHAT CAN I DO?

How we use our voice on an individual level will determine whether we are at a greater or lower risk of suffering illnesses. Apply the following pieces of advice:

- > Articulate sounds correctly and comprehensively, achieving a greater vocal range and thus giving the phonation organs a rest and allowing speech to be better understood.
- > Employ a correct rhythm of vocal emission, neither excessively fast nor monotone.
- > **Control posture** as this can affect voice performance: keep the back straight, the shoulders back and the chin relaxed, when sitting do not cross legs. All the muscles and organs located in the torso play a crucial role in breathing and air control and, consequently, in voice emission.



- > Try not to talk while carrying out physical exertion.
- > Avoid shouting and **do not strain your voice**.
- > Avoid, where possible, coughing, throat clearing and noisy sneezes (substitute this behaviour with yawns to relax the throat, drink water and swallow slowly).
- > Be aware of **abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing** when you speak.
- > Drink water frequently (2 litres per day is recommended but taken in small and spaced out quantities). Try not to take drinks that are too cold or hot.
- > Avoid consuming tobacco, caffeine, alcoholic drinks and hot spices.
- > Also ensure that there is a renewal of air in the room and keep optimum temperature and humidity conditions: appropriately regulating the air-conditioning system, avoiding draughts (due to open doors, etc.), among others. Avoid abrupt changes in temperature.
- > Leave **your voice to rest** during breaks and avoid prolonged exposure (especially if you are already suffering from a voice ailment).
- > In case of throat irritation, it is better to take honey or citrus sweets (lemon, orange), instead of mint sweets.

ADVICE:

If you would like to know more about vocal hygiene, courses on speech therapy and voice techniques are available.