

# **BRING YOUR BEST VOICE**

VOCAL PRODUCTION – THE FOUNDATION FOR SINGERS

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## **Foundation Skill: POSTURE/ALIGNMENT**

Alexander Technique

Check alignment

Check balance

Simple stretches –think senior’s Pilates for core strength

Get the heart pumping – lifting the knees but soft impact

Three cleansing breaths for focus and relaxation

## **The Critical Skill : BREATHING to sing**

Appoggio or Elastic Recoil – find it by panting. Elastic recoil brings about quick, totally relaxed breaths/rhythmic breaths. There is a coordination of the motor and the vibrator.

The abdominal muscle tucks in and up on exhalation.

This moves the diaphragm (an involuntary muscle) back to resting position and monitors the speed of the exhalation (breath management).

Inhalation happens automatically if you keep your larynx, pharynx and mouth open and allow your abdominal muscles to release. The air will come into your body as the result of the vacuum created in the lungs. The release of the abs pulls the air into the lungs.

Place your hand on your throat as a reminder to keep it relaxed and open.

Breathing exercises:

1. Four staccato hisses followed by a long hiss.
2. Arms up in front, elbows bent; pull them together and hiss out. Pop them open and let the air fall into your lungs.
3. Swimmers move – inhale as you bring your arms above your head; exhale as bring them down.

## **The skill we don’t think about: PHONATION**

Coordination of the release of air (exhalation) with the vibrations of the vocal folds

Three kinds of **onsets** or ways to phonate. See attached sheet for exercises.

Breathy Exercise:

Glottal Exercise:

Coordinated or Soft Exercises:

#1 Phantom of the Opera

#2 “Castle on a Cloud”

## **The skill we’re confused about: Resonance**

The sound beam that hits soft fleshy surface (soft palate) will be unfocused

The sound beam that hits hard surface (hard palate) will have ring/focus

Three things needed to achieve resonance:

Air energy (motor)  
Appropriate soft palate lift  
Sound beam hits hard palate/singing in the mask)

Other factors:

Vowels are tall and open; they produce the overtones.

Larynx stays in the seated position.

Inhale cool air through the mouth to feel the seated position.

Corners of mouth are in a natural position (goalposts) – no east/west “smile”

Exercises: See attached sheet

Fred Waring exercise – separate attachment

### **The skill that determines synchronization: Articulation**

The jaw/mandible is a hinge – hinges swing freely unless they need WD40.

The tongue makes minute adjustments for vowels and consonants

The lips are soft and natural; NEVER in a smile position

The zygomatic muscles lift the face into a pleasant expression; eyes are “on”

The lifted appearance should be present 100% of the time

Do NOT cement jaw in one place; let it float in the “duh” position

Keep pharynx, lips, tongue and jaw relaxed for immediate easy adjustment of vocal instrument through word and register changes

Air energy must be present throughout

Exercises: See attached sheet