Authenticity and the Speaking Voice

We hear it: Do we believe them? Trust? Like? Connect to? Want to follow? We make a great number of assumptions based on voice alone.

BREATHE is one KEY to Authentic Voice and Executive Presence:

- Breath is our connection to others and shares our vulnerability
  - We hold our breath more often than we are aware
  - Shallow breath is the “Freeze, Faint, Fight, Flee” breath
- Being vulnerable is a strong choice - not oversharig, but open and honest
  - When hiding or withholding – feels and sounds fake to us and to our audience
- The voice rides on the exhale
- Not pushed from throat – not tight – voice is shared out
- We use different voices – “code switching” - and many of them can still be us
  - We dress differently for different situations and we are still ourselves
- Make our vocal choices conscious choices

Vocal Code Habits that can mislead our listener and/or lead to miscommunication:

- **Up speak** – ending phrases or sentences with an up inflection can imply lack of commitment, confidence, knowledge, authority, etc.
- **Vocal Fry** – speaking at the lower end of your register without enough air and with little or no inflection or energy. Vocal Fry is difficult to hear, annoying, and unprofessional to many.
- **Monotone** – all on one note is often considered professional when used but can be boring when heard. Monotone lacks the prosodic choices that increase clarity of message.
- **Yoyo-ing** – sending the voice out and pulling back at the end – not letting the voice land on the recipient. Yoyo-ing gives the impression of lack of commitment and indecision.
- **Off Voice** – more air than vibration, this “precious” voice is often used to not be overbearing and yet lacks its authenticity.
- **High Pitched** – young high sound, often shrill, and out of alignment with the visual. It tends to undermine believability and authority; often considered annoying.
- **The Rumbler** – a voice trapped in the low vibration, The Rumbler is often praised and very difficult to understand.
- **The Laser** – a narrow, pushed, focused sound that can come across as harsh and doesn’t allow the sound to flow and resonate fully.

Voices can be loud and large or small and quiet if **connected** and **truthful** and **grounded**.

Note: Any voice is inauthentic if disconnected from the source.