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<th>Terms</th>
<th>Best Practice</th>
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| Volume Projection    | They can be heard clearly from anywhere in the room, yet they are not uncomfortably loud or straining to be loud. | • Are they speaking too softly or overly loud?  
• When they are in a larger room, will people be able to hear them?  
• Does their voice sound strained, tired or hoarse by the end of their talk? | • Naturally quiet or loud person  
• Nervous or intimidated  
• Voice strain can be caused by trying to talk louder rather than projecting more | • Practice speaking as if someone is in the back of the room  
• Ask the organizers for a microphone  
• Try vocal exercises to project – it’ll help you feel less tired after your talk too!  
• Practice talking at different volumes with someone until you get a better sense of how loud is appropriate |
| Intonation           | All of these elements should work together to convey the meaning of a given thought (e.g. sad, powerful, questioning, humorous), and therefore they should alter throughout a presentation. | • Is their voice engaging?  
• Are they monotone or is their voice melodic?  
• Do they incorporate meaningful pauses throughout their presentation?  
• How is their pitch? High pitches are hard to listen to, while low pitches can make it difficult to discern separate words  
• Are they overly dynamic such that it’s overwhelming? | • Monotone voice can come from feeling unconnected to the material they’re presenting  
• Feeling uncertain about the ideas they’re presenting (e.g. trailing off or ending sentences as questions)  
• They feel like they’re over-exaggerating but it doesn’t come across  
• They are naturally very expressive  
• Overcompensating leading to overly dynamic, cluttered vocal patterns | • If you’ve lost sight of what excited you about your talk, find ways to incorporate what makes you passionate. This will naturally help your voice sound more engaging  
• Practice a couple sentences while varying pitch, tone, and intonation to give different meanings or find the right level of variation so that it’s engaging  
• Work on pauses and pace to tone down overly expressive vocals |
| Pitch Tone Timbre    | All of these elements should work together to convey the meaning of a given thought (e.g. sad, powerful, questioning, humorous), and therefore they should alter throughout a presentation. | • Is their voice engaging?  
• Are they monotone or is their voice melodic?  
• Do they incorporate meaningful pauses throughout their presentation?  
• How is their pitch? High pitches are hard to listen to, while low pitches can make it difficult to discern separate words  
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| Enunciation          | Words should be pronounced clearly and completely. | • Are they speaking clearly?  
• Are they enunciating enough? | • Speaking too fast can cause jumbled words  
• Non-native English speakers may have difficulty pronouncing some words | • Break down complex sentences. Do you need all those long/difficult words in the same sentence?  
• Practice saying difficult words or phrases  
• Speak slower, especially if there’s a section of your talk with difficult words |
| Pace Rhythm Pauses   | Use rhythm to carry meaning.  
Slow the pace to emphasize key ideas, and quicken the pace to show excitement or humor.  
Incorporate pauses to emphasize an important point.  
Note: A longer silence will help re-capture an audience’s attention if they’ve lost focus. | • Does their rhythm seem normal?  
• Are they talking too fast or too slow?  
• Are they taking pauses between ideas / sentences? | • Trying to fit too much content into their allotted time  
• Nervous or uncomfortable with silence while in front of an audience  
• Unprepared or unsure of what to say can cause pausing in weird places while they think | • Critically assess talk content and decide if some material can be removed  
• Practice again but talk slower  
• Speak in short sentences supported by small breaths to produce a smooth rhythm  
• Write in places you want to pause in your notes  
• Uses pauses between ideas to give your brain time to catch up |
| Filler words         | An ideal presentation will not include filler words. Filler words are distracting and take away from the message, and excessive use can even reduce the presenter’s credibility. | • Examples: basically, you know, I mean, uh/um, actually, okay, right, well, so | • Unprepared or unsure of what they want to say  
• Nervous  
• Habit  
• Talking faster than they can think  
• Nervous or uncomfortable with pausing and silence | • Try replacing filler words with pauses  
• Become aware of when you use them: record and watch yourself or have a friend listen and stop or interrupt you every time you use one  
• Work on smoothing out your transitions so you can flow from one idea to another without needing to think |
## Nonverbal Communication: Terms, best practices, and ways to diagnose and fix

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<td>Eye contact</td>
<td>Use eye contact to engage the audience. Eye contact can help make the audience feel like you’re talking to them.</td>
<td>• Are they maintaining eye contact?</td>
<td>• Nervous</td>
<td>• If making eye contact is difficult, try looking at someone’s forehead, a colorful shirt, or look just above people’s heads</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Are they looking at their slides or computer?</td>
<td>• Feeling overly exposed standing in front of a group, which leads to wanting to hide from or avoid the audience</td>
<td>• Rather than scanning the audience, take time to make one-on-one eye contact with individuals</td>
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<td>• Is their body facing the audience or turned sideways or towards the screen?</td>
<td>• Too focused on their slides and the figures/images</td>
<td>• If you’re in a large room, turn your head or even body to talk to all corners of the room, not just the people in the middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Incorporate deliberate movements that help illustrate or emphasize points, while minimizing repetitive or unnecessary motion that is distracting.</td>
<td>• Any distracting movements?</td>
<td>• Nervous energy</td>
<td>• If you’re trying to stand still, think about grounding your feet throughout the presentation</td>
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<td>• Any excessive hand movements?</td>
<td>• Some people prefer to walk and talk while others like to be stationary</td>
<td>• If you have excessive hand movements, try arms at your side or hooking your thumb in your front pants pocket</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Are they pacing, rocking, or exhibiting nervous behavior?</td>
<td>• They normally “talk with their hands”</td>
<td>• If you prefer to walk, think about where you can build in movement so that it’s helpful, like during transitions between ideas</td>
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<td>• Are there points in the talk where movement could be used to enhance their delivery?</td>
<td>• It is common for people to start out presenting away from their computer but then move to stand behind the podium (because standing in front of an audience can be scary)</td>
<td>• If you’ve practiced and can present without your notes, commit to standing away from the podium and hold your ground even if you get nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body language</td>
<td>Your body language should display confidence and be open and friendly.</td>
<td>• How is their posture?</td>
<td>• Poor body language often stems from feeling nervous or wanting to avoid / hide from an audience</td>
<td>• Record yourself to see what kind of body language you’re giving off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posture</td>
<td>Start off with a good posture (straight back, level chin, and eyes facing the audience) to show your audience that you are prepared and ready. Use power poses to command attention and build confidence.</td>
<td>• Do they have defensive or timid body language?</td>
<td>• Some people are overly confident and it can come off as cocky or arrogant</td>
<td>• Have a friend watch you present and ask for their honest feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power poses</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Are they using / leaning on any unnecessary props? (e.g. pointer, wall, or table)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Refer to our Nonverbal Communication CommKit article for suggested power poses and try different ones to see which makes you feel most confident</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use your daily interactions with friends and colleagues to become more conscientious of your posture</td>
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