

Suzanne's Quick Tips

Episode #6: Breath support



Culips English Podcast

Transcript

Hey guys, this is Suzanne, and you're listening to Culips. Today we are doing a Quick Tip episode and this is where we share a quick and applicable tip that you can incorporate into your daily English. And today, we're going to be talking about breath support, especially in situations where you might be nervous, like an interview or a presentation.

But before we get started, I want to remind you that the best way to study English with Culips is to download the study guide. We made it especially to help you improve your English and we think that you'll love it. So make sure you visit [Culips.com](https://culips.com) and download it now.

All right, now let's jump in to our topic. So breath support. Sometimes when we're in an important meeting, an interview or maybe a class presentation, we might find that we're kind of nervous, right? Our nerves go up, our body temperature goes up. Our breathing starts getting shallow. And we tend not to have a lot of what we call vocal presence and breath support.

Vocal presence can be described as when your voice has enough volume to fill the room. And it flows and feels relaxed. Breath support could be defined as when the breath that is supporting your voice is relaxed and flowing as well so that you're able to have your voice heard without pushing or hurting your vocal cords. So in other words, the breath needs to come first before you can have a very nice sounding loud and present voice.

Have you guys ever gone out with friends to sing karaoke? I'm sure there are many of you that have done that or do that all the time. I know I have. I love karaoke! And whenever I get behind the microphone, it's so easy to scream into the mic and belt out our favorite rock tune, right? Well, this can really actually hurt our vocal cords. Especially if we don't have the proper breath support. We may even wake up the next morning and sound hoarse, not the animal kind of horse but H-O-A-R-S-E meaning our voice sounds scratchy. So, what can we

do to help our voices be heard and sound better during an important meeting or presentation? Let's try some breathing exercises.

So, our first one is we're going to make our breath go deeper. Now we know that we're breathing through our lungs and it doesn't necessarily go deeper than that. But many times we're only breathing from the top of our lungs, the first shallow area or reservoir of our lungs. So in this case, I want you to try putting your hands on your waist or possibly along your back body right underneath your ribcage. And feel as though you are taking an inhale into your hands, breathe into your hands. And then exhale, exhale as though you're pushing with your hands the breath out of your lungs and your hands are coming together. So you've let out all your air and now you're going to inhale back into the hands as though you're filling up that part of your back first. Inhaling into the back body. Good. Now, this is a way for you to just sort of wake up that area of the body.

Number two, we're going to make the breath lasts longer. This is an exercise that we use a lot in acting exercises, and it's called quick recovery. So we're going to try counting from one to 20, adding one number at a time. So first, and we're going to inhale and we're going to say the number one, one. Then we inhale again, 1-2. Inhale, 1-2-3. Then we're going to keep going until we do 20 counts on one breath. So we'll go 1-2-3-4. 1-2-3-4-5. 1-2-3-4-5-6 all the way till 20.

All right now, now let's try number three. This is called the taco tongue breath. Well, it's not really called that but I call it that. And it's because we're going to put our tongue into a taco shape by curving the sides around. Then we're going to inhale through our tongue as though we're inhaling through a straw so and then exhale through our nose. Inhale through the mouth. Exhale through the nose. This is actually a really great calming breath. It causes our breath to move slower, which will then also make our mind relax and also relax our nervous system.

So, I hope that these help you these quick and easy breathing exercises. I want you to let us know if you try these at home and if they help you. Remember to check us out on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube by searching for Culips English Podcast. Please leave

us a rating and review - five stars if you can - on Apple podcasts or wherever you listen to podcasts. All right, see you soon!

Quick Tip Takeaways

1. Breath support is using our lungs and diaphragm efficiently so that we don't damage our vocal folds and so that we have vocal presence.
2. Vocal presence is having a loud enough, yet supported enough voice that fills the room and feels relaxed and at ease when you are speaking.
3. Remember to try stretching your back body when filling up your lungs so that you use the full capacity of your inhalation.

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been told to speak up in class or during a meeting? What were the tactics that you used to fix that issue?
2. Have you ever pushed your voice, trying to be louder? What were the tactics you used to make your vocal folds feel better? What happened to them over time?

Study Challenges

Try doing these breath exercises once a week and see how you feel. Perhaps try them before a stressful class/meeting. You will find that they bring you relaxation as well as vocal benefits.

If you are adventurous, try this with a friend or colleague before a group activity or presentation. You can record yourself before the breath work and after and see which sounded better.

Credits

Music: If by Broke for Free; Things to Come by Broke for free

Episode preparation/research: Suzanne Ceretta

Audio editor: Andrew Bates

Study guide writer: Suzanne Ceretta

Business manager: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima