

REACH YOUR SPEECH POTENTIAL

AGENDA

- **Speech Potential Associates**
 - **Who are we?**
 - **What do we do?**
- **Accent Reduction Training**
 - **What is it?**
 - **Why is it important?**
 - **How do we do it?**
- **Multicultural Diversity in the Workplace**
- **Corporate Commitment to Accent Reduction**
- **FAQs and Your Questions**

SPEECH POTENTIAL ASSOCIATES

- **Provides results oriented Accent Reduction training to further company goals**
- **Identifies communication problems in the workforce**
- **Helps remove barriers in communication**
- **Offers on-site training**

ALICE R. KAMIN, MS, CCC-SLP BACKGROUND AND CREDENTIALS

- **Founder and Director of Speech Potential Associates**
- **Certified, licensed Speech-Language Pathologist and Accent Reduction Specialist with 20+ years of experience**
- **Specializes in foreign, regional, and non-standard accents and dialects**

CLIENTELE

- **IMS Health**
- **Unisys Corp.**
- **Wyeth**
- **Cigna**
- **Deloitte Consulting**
- **Rohm and Haas**
- **SmithKline**
- **Nuclear Regulatory Commission**
- **SEI**

- Peabody Energy
- Capital Analysts
- TimeBridge Technologies
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- Surgical Monitoring Associates
- Brintnall and Nicolini
- Primavera Systems
- ALICO
- Basell
- MBNA
- Tyco
- Essroc
- CMS Companies
- Catalina Health Resource

WHAT IS AN ACCENT?

- A distinctive style of speaking a non-native language unique to specific regions and cultures
 - Languages and dialects contain features that are similar and different – **NOT** right or wrong
 - Accented speech involves many levels of language
- Cross-Cultural Communication
- “The spoken word belongs half to the one who speaks and half to the one who hears” - French Proverb*
- Standard English – our "official" dialect
 - Globalization requires us to address cross-cultural communication in the workplace

ACCENT REDUCTION GOALS

- To respond to inherent challenges of today’s multicultural workforce by promoting optimal communication skills
- To enhance cross-cultural communication
- To capitalize on employee assets by overcoming communication barriers created by accented speech
- To improve productivity and the corporate bottom line

ACCENT REDUCTION OBJECTIVES

- Increase intelligibility and decrease misunderstood messages
- Develop better verbal and written delivery and communication style
- Enhance cross-cultural communication

ACCENTS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

- Individuals with strong accents and/or non-standard English speaking styles are often misjudged
 - Contributions of skilled employees are diminished when accents interfere with communication
 - Employees with foreign or regional accents and/or dialects may face corporate barriers
- Corporate Impact
- Employees representing (company) must be skillful communicators
 - Misunderstood communication is frustrating for both speaker and listener
 - Misunderstood communication is inefficient and costly
 - Misconstrued messages are missed opportunities

VOICE AND VOCAL PROJECTION

- Is influenced by gender and culture
- Reflects levels of confidence, energy, friendliness, and mood
- Can be modulated to persuade, control, comfort, provoke, etc
- SPA addresses voice and vocal projection

PROGRAM PLAN

- Administer comprehensive testing
- Determine, prioritize error patterns
- Instruct in production, use of American English language features
- Emphasize American communication style in workplace (i.e.: meetings, presentations)
- Address non-verbal problem situations (i.e.: writing skills, non-verbal behavior, body language, cultural diversity)
- Facilitate transfer, habituation of newly acquired English skills into work environment

PROGRAM INCLUDES

- Customized course content
- Workbooks, books, CD's, DVD's, and supplementary materials
- Access to trainer resource library
- Assignments for daily practice

TRAINING FORMATS AND SCHEDULING

- Intensive individual and group training
- Group training offered in courses, seminars, workshops
- Long-term training (annual contracts)
- Multi-formatted training
- Advanced courses

- Flexible scheduling
- On-site training
- Telephone coaching
- Consultations
- Combinations of multiple formats
- Services offered on contractual or retainer basis

OUTCOMES

- Preparation of (Company) employees for advancement within the company
- Increased communicative competence and confidence
- Increased productivity
- Improved presentations
- Greater meeting participation
- Improved interpersonal and phone communication

ASSESSING THE NEED FOR ACCENT REDUCTION ON YOUR COMPANY/ORGANIZATION

- Who here sees a communication problem at work?
- How would you describe the communication breakdowns?
- How seriously do these breakdowns impact
 - a) Public perception of the company
 - b) Participation in meetings
 - c) Ability to move (Company) toward its goals
 - d) **Productivity and profitability: the bottom line**

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

- Participants may be selected
 - a) During recruitment; and/or
 - b) Upon being relocated
- Identify employees who need communication skill-building
- Participation may be determined by
 - a) Seniority
 - b) Manager approval; and/or
 - c) Employee commitment
 - d) Job classification

CORPORATE COMMITMENT

- What is management's goal for employee communication skills at the various levels?
- What is the corporate philosophy of responsibility to address communication skills of employees?
- Are you capitalizing on employees' skills and assets?
- Should instruction be mandatory or voluntary?

- Should employees shoulder a percentage of the cost?
 - What incentives and/or support will management give to those who successfully improve their communication skills?
- Incorporating Accent Reduction into a (Company) Benefits Package
- Screenings for all international and non-standard English speaking employees
 - Needs-based on-site consults and workshops
 - Group and/or individual training targeting specific accent features

TO FACILITATE ACCENT REDUCTION TRAINING FOR EMPLOYEES

Companies/Managers/Directors must:

- Establish a positive attitude toward language learning
- Establish a positive attitude toward other cultures
- Provide second language learners with needed time, patience, encouragement, support, acceptance and feedback

FAQs

How Long Does Accent Reduction Take?

- A **minimum** of 4 months for 50% improvement in objective testing
- Additional and multiformatted training recommended
- A variable, gradual process
- Ongoing training for optimal results

WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE PROGRESS?

- Adequate hearing
- Auditory discrimination
- Speech problems in native language
- Acculturation
- Motivation
- Commitment
- Determination
- Practice
- Support

ARE YOU EVER TOO OLD TO REDUCE YOUR ACCENT?

- **NO!!!!**

IS THE GOAL TO LOSE AN ACCENT?

- For native English speakers – goal is NOT to replace the English dialect; goal is to learn to “code-switch”
- For Non-Native speakers of English – goal is to increase intelligibility – to reduce, **not** to eliminate the accent

DOES ACCENT REDUCTION INTERFERE WITH MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY?

■ **NO!** The goal is to **promote** multicultural diversity and understanding and to bridge communication gaps

CLEAR COMMUNICATION-A CLEAR CHOICE

Testimonials

■ *"This course is wonderful! It brought back my confidence...Not only did I learn the correct pronunciation of sounds...I now understand the whole picture of the English language..."*

-Lin X, M.D., Ph.D. Harvard University

■ *"The techniques that I acquired at Speech Potential brought the quality of my speech in sync with the level of my message."*

-Klaus K. M.B.A. Regulatory Compliance Consultant

■ *"Grammar.....Pronunciation.....Intonation.....Writing..... all seemed like broken pieces of a puzzle when I was learning the English language. Alice Kamin's Accent Reduction Course helped me put the pieces back together and in the right place. Thanks, Alice! You made a difference in my daily life"*

-Panos T. Financial Management Consultant

■ *"Ms. Kamin analyzed my speech and developed a personalized plan to work on my foreign accent and grammatical problems. She analyzed the reasons for my problems and worked with me systematically to correct them. Her knowledge, experience and patience made it possible for me to achieve noticeable improvement in a short period of time. I feel much more confident in myself now and I wish I had taken this course earlier. I strongly recommend this course to anyone who wants to improve his/her accent effectively and efficiently."*

-Y. Yuan, Ph.D. Manager, Statistical Methodology

QUESTIONS?

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