

## NEUTRAL AMERICAN COURSE SYLLABUS

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**Course Title: Accent Edge: The Ultimate Neutral American Accent Course for Filipinos**

**Quarter/Yr: Winter 2022**

**Day/Time: Saturdays, 10AM (GMT+8)**

**Dates: Jan 7-March 11, 2022**

**Location: ONLINE**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84975915765?pwd=TC96aXVVRUJ3K0Z3WE9saElIbINGQT09>

**Meeting ID: 849 7591 5765**

**Passcode: 505394**

**One tap mobile**

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### **Course Description:**

The sound of a speaker's voice matters twice as much as the content of the message, according to the Wall Street Journal. Become aware of the subconscious ways in which our voices are sabotaging our ultimate success. In this private course, Filipinos identify their idiolects, and learn a proven 3-Prong system (Auditory, Visual, and Kinesthetic) to transform their sound and develop their most compelling charismatic Neutral American Accent for use on the International workplace. Instruction includes recorded vocal exercises, voice-matching, cold reading, improvisation, self-recording, transcription, International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) scoring, Schneider's Ear-Training Method, kinesthetic drills, and the development of a personalized pronunciation syllabus culled from the student's own vocabulary. Filipinos are given a window into actor's secrets to developing a winning, authentic voice that reflects their true character and can help propel them to the top of their field.

### **Goals & Objectives:**

Welcome! In this private instruction program for Filipinos, the goal is two-fold: to identify your idiolect, and to learn a Neutral American Accent for use in the workplace. The ultimate objective is to achieve a seamless vocal shift that does not call attention to itself, but transforms the way the speaker is perceived, integrating the individual's true power and self-worth with an authentic sound that reflects that truth. Working in a safe, supportive environment, participants are guided to:

- discover the world of voice-training and empowering acting methods for the workplace;
- identify their idiolect and how their voice sounds to others
- design and develop their most charismatic voice;
- build confidence and trust in their learning process;
- modify pitch, tone, volume, resonance, timbre, tempo, meter, pronunciation, and delivery;
- accurately produce General American English (NAE) sounds, intonation and rhythm;
- break through blocks and limitations;
- recognize the contrasts between the sounds and features of GAE and the student's own idiolect, and understand how those discrepancies may psychologically affect their audience
- develop power, authenticity and charisma for public speaking, telephone conversations, meetings, and any forum in which the voice is used for work;
- develop tools for dealing with performance anxiety.
- become a master of the 3-prong method to change the voice for character work, dialects, or anything else

### **Policies and Expectations:**

Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. Not all sessions will be recorded. Failure to show up on the student's part will result in forfeiture of the missed session. We cannot promise a make-up class or timely delivery of a recording if you don't show up for class. Commitment to see the entire course through and complete homework assignments on time is a necessity. Tuition must be paid in full prior to the end of the 3-month instruction period. No refunds will be given. An ability and willingness to put ego aside in order to hear, internalize and assimilate vocal corrections are vital to progress. As in any learning process, the student must trust the teacher. This course requires at least 10 minutes a day of vocal warm-ups,

and up to three hours a week of homework. Show up with a positive attitude and a willingness to hear yourself the way you actually sound to others, and to embrace your potential as a master of your voice and accent.

**Recommended Readings:**

The Well-Spoken Woman: Your Guide to Looking and Sounding Your Best, by Christine K. Jahnke

How to Get the Part Without Falling Apart, by Margie Haber

VOICE Onstage and Off, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, by Robert Barton and Rocco Dal Vera

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Each segment (Part) in this outline is intended to take one week.

<b>Topic/Objective</b>	<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Materials</b>
<p><b>Part One: Introduction.</b></p> <p>Interview. Diagnostic Voice Assessment. Breakdown of your Idiolect. Overview of the 3- Prong Method: Auditory, Visual &amp; Kinesthetic. Overview of 3 categories of vocal pitfalls: Lack of Intelligibility, Power Loss, and Regional Bias. Beginning diaphragm breathing.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing Weekly Assignments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Record one minute of your end of a telephone conversation, NAE script or audition, or speech. Begin to become aware of how your voice sounds to others.</li> <li>2) Listen back and transcribe your recording, print it out double-spaced in size 20 font or higher, and keep it in your notebook.</li> </ol>	<p>Dedicated <b>notebook</b> with twenty dividers.</p> <p>One <b>recording device</b> that can run basic audio tracking software (computer with Garage Band, Audacity (free download), Twisted Wave or the equivalent), OR two separate single track recording devices (smartphone, dictation recorder, etc).</p> <p><b>Recordings:</b> Case Study #1: Your Recording of a Neutral American native speaker</p>

<p><b>Part Two: The Auditory Method.</b></p> <p>Ear-Training Technique - using recording technology to get you out of your head and into mimicry mode. The Music of Speech. How to use tempo, volume, meter, pitch, tone, resonance, lilt, and cadence to modify your speech incrementally.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Case Study #1 (CS #1): Find a recording or Youtube video of an NAE voice in your demographic or casting range whom you admire or emulate .</li> <li>2) Voice-matching exercise: Create a loop of 3 lines of CS #1, looped 14 times each, with #'s 4, 6, 8, and 10 muted. Play it back in your headphones while, on track #2, you record yourself mimicking/ repeating each line in time with the recording. It should become a chant. Then listen back to your voice along side your CS. Repeat. Try to match elements of tempo, volume, meter, pitch, tone, resonance, lilt, and cadence exactly. Take a break. Listen back. Repeat. Send your closest match to the teacher.</li> <li>3) Practice this voice-match exercise in the evening, and continue your daily breathing exercise in the morning, adding lip trills, sirens, and “hoos.”</li> <li>4) Continue Self-Recording and Transcription</li> </ol>	<p><b>Online Resources:</b> (online video tech support tutorials for basic 2-track recording on Mac &amp; PC, Stuart’s Audacity Tips, Eliza Jane’s Looping Video)</p> <p><b>SELF-RECORDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR EAR-TRAINING</b></p> <p>Headphones</p> <p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Morning Breathing exercise, and MP3 of additional vocal warmups: lip and tongue trills, sirens, and “hoo-hoo-hoos.” or diaphragm exercises.</li> </ol>
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<p><b>Part Three: The Visual Method.</b></p> <p>Understanding the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and how to use it to compare your idiolect to General American English (GAE) Vowels, Consonants, the IPA online interactive Chart, “Vowelita the Vowelgator” and the map of your mouth. How to read the IPA interactive charts online.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Start a column in your Personal NAE Spreadsheet for each problem IPA vowel and consonant your diagnostic session uncovered.</li> <li>2) Begin a word list behind each tab, with words that contain that phoneme, culled from your own vocabulary, by listening to weekly recordings of yourself.</li> <li>3) Begin to score your transcriptions with IPA symbols of the sounds you need to work on</li> <li>4) Continue Morning Vocal Warm-ups.</li> <li>5) Record yourself repeating the GAE sounds on the MP3's</li> <li>6) Continue Self-Recording and Transcription</li> </ol>	<p><b>Online Resources:</b> <a href="http://www.ipachart.com">http://www.ipachart.com</a> Interactive IPA Charts for both Vowels and Consonants</p> <p><a href="http://ipa.typeit.org">http://ipa.typeit.org</a> Website for typing in IPA symbols</p> <p>Your Notebook - In Progress</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) GAE IPA Sample Words</li> <li>2) GAE IPA Sample Sentences</li> <li>3) Your Table of Contents</li> <li>4) Sounds of Spelled Letters</li> </ol> <p>List of IPA Vowels of GAE with sample words, PDF of Vowelita the Vowelgator <b>Recordings:</b> MP3 of Front, Central, and Back Vowels of GAE pronounced</p>
<p><b>Part Four: The Kinesthetic Method</b></p> <p>Relating phonetics to tongue positions in the mouth. Identifying the physicality of vocal charisma and musicality. Drilling problem sounds. Advanced breathing techniques. The importance of relaxation. “Vowelesthenics” Using your body or forearm to model tongue positions as they relate to pronunciation of your problem phonemes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Record yourself repeating the words on your lists, alone and in sentence context.</li> <li>2) Identify tongue positions on the Interactive IPA chart for the sounds of GAE identified as mispronounced in your diagnostic, relative to your habitual pronunciation.</li> <li>3) Add relaxation, advanced breathing, resonance, tone, volume, and pitch exercises to your daily morning vocal warm-up.</li> <li>4) Practice the “hoo-hoos,” sirens and trills while working out or running to relate breath to sound.</li> <li>5) Continue Self-Recording and Transcription</li> </ol>	<p><b>Textbook:</b> VOICE Onstage and Off, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, by Robert Barton and Rocco Dal Vera</p> <p>A piano or keyboard is helpful, but not mandatory</p> <p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Breathing 1 - 13 minute Relaxation</li> <li>2) Breathing 2 - 3 minute Relaxation and Breath</li> <li>3) Breathing 3 - Curing Shallow Breathing</li> <li>4) Breathing 4 - Releasing Glottal Attack.</li> <li>5) Breathing 5 - Freeing Inhalation</li> </ol>

<p><b>Part Five: Intelligibility:</b></p> <p>Speeding, Mumbling, Skipping Syllables. The Magic Pause and how to incorporate it. Psychological impact of confusing your audience, or rushing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Case Study #2 : Find a recording or Youtube video of a charismatic speaker who has mastered the art of pausing and slowing down (CS #2)</li> <li>2) Record yourself at a different pace, using pauses.</li> <li>3) Read the assigned text and Practice the Haber phrasing technique with your transcriptions and the closing argument on page #257 of VOICE: Onstage and Off.</li> <li>4) Continue Self-Recording, Transcription, and switch to CS #2 for Voice Matching exercise.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Textbook:</b> How to Get the Part Without Falling Apart by Margie Haber Part 3: The Haber Phrase Technique, Chapters #1 &amp; 2, pages #252-276</p> <p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <p><b>MP3 CS #2</b></p>
<p><b>Part Six: Power loss:</b></p> <p>Eliminating “Little Girl Voice,” Nasal Resonances, the ubiquitous Upward Cadence, Glottal Fry and other pitch and volume patterns that diminish your vocal impact.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Transcribe your Voicematch Case Studies</li> <li>2) Score the pitch patterns in your transcriptions of yourself vs. your Case Studies</li> <li>3) Practice exercises for Resonance</li> <li>4) Continue Self-Recording, Transcription, and CS #2 for Voice Matching exercise.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pitch and Resonance - KEY warmup</li> <li>2) Chest Resonance Breath Support and Volume</li> <li>3) CS #2</li> </ol>

<p><b>Part Seven: Regional Bias</b></p> <p>Identifying liabilities of your idiolect in the moment. Deeply exploring your own idiolect.</p>	<p>At this point, you should have at least 5 transcribed recordings of yourself.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pull out your transcriptions, and transfer any remaining problem vocabulary words to the lists in your notebook, under the appropriate headings.</li> <li>2) Find word lists online, add words you use or want to use to your lists under the appropriate lexical set</li> <li>3) Complete Map My Idiolect Project Packet</li> </ol>	<p>Your Personalized Notebook with transcriptions of work speech.</p> <p><b>Online Resources:</b></p> <p>MAP MY IDIOLECT PROJECT</p> <p>Your Notebook - In Progress</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Front Vowels</li> <li>2) Central Vowels</li> <li>3) Back Vowels</li> <li>4) Consonants</li> </ol>
<p><b>Part Eight: Mastering Volume</b></p> <p>Connecting breath support with sound production. Identifying the head voice vs. the chest voice. The passagio and how to place the voice in the nose to bring volume to the upper register, without sounding breathy or losing power.</p>	<p>Find a recording or Youtube video of a charismatic speaker who has mastered the art of dynamics. (CS #3)</p> <p>Score your transcriptions with volume notations.</p> <p>Re-record yourself reading the transcriptions, varying volume for emphasis</p>	<p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Volume 1 - Single Note Intensification</li> <li>2) Volume 2 - with Breath Support</li> <li>3) Volume 3 - Isolation</li> </ol> <p>Your Notebook - In Progress</p>
<p><b>Part Nine: Mastering Pitch</b></p> <p>Musicality: Using your full range to draw in your audience.</p>	<p>Find a recording or Youtube video of a charismatic speaker who has mastered the art of changing pitch (the charismatic voice). (CS #4)</p> <p>Score your transcriptions with pitch notations.</p> <p>Re-record yourself reading the transcriptions, varying pitch for emphasis</p>	<p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Pitch Isolation</li> <li>2) Varying Pitch Patterns</li> <li>3) CS #3 &amp; CS #4</li> </ol>

<p><b>Part Ten: Integration</b></p> <p><b>Monologues, Improv and Auditions - final Performance!</b></p>	<p>Create Your Own Daily Vocal warm-up including Relaxation, Breathing, pitch, volume, resonance, and diction exercises that have worked best for you.</p> <p>Record a Neutral American Monologue</p> <p>Transcribe it, and print it out double-spaced, font sized 20.</p> <p>Listen back and score your copy with any remaining issues you hear, including pitch, volume, glottal fry, and pronunciation (IPA)</p>	<p><b>Your Notebook - In Progress</b></p> <p><b>Recordings:</b></p> <p><b>Isolating Volume, Varying Pitch</b></p>
<p><b>Post Mortem: Forming Sustainable Habits for Vocal Power</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Randomly record yourself or ask your friend to “surprise” record you once a week.</li> <li>2) Listen back and score your copy with any remaining issues you hear, including pitch, volume, glottal fry, and pronunciation (IPA)</li> <li>3) Memorize, vary, and modify your personalized daily vocal warm-up, but always include relaxation, diaphragm breathing, integration of the singing chest voice with the speaking voice, volume control, pausing practice, and pitch/ range expansion</li> </ol>	<p><b>Your Personal Daily Vocal Warm-Up MP3</b></p> <p><b>Your Notebook - In Progress</b></p>



<p><b>ONGOING: The Charismatic Voice</b></p>	<p>Apply what you've learned to your work speech throughout the day. Continue to "look in the vocal mirror" by recording yourself daily and listening back.</p> <p>Design Your Power Voice with elements of your favorite Case Studies. Apply what you've learned to an opening and closing argument. Record yourself. Listen back. Score for pronunciation, Volume, Pitch, Resonance, Power Pauses, and any other elements you've gleaned from your favorite Case Studies.</p>	<p><b>Your Personal Daily Vocal Warm-Up MP3</b></p> <p><b>Your Personal Pronunciation Notebook</b></p> <p><b>Your Case- Studies</b></p>
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