

So the key points in cultivating a rich, warm, pleasant voice are ...

- Bring the sound from deep inside of your belly and use pace, pitch and a pleasant sounding voice to create interest and attraction.

Commit to enunciating your words and projecting your voice so you are heard and understood. Enjoy the sound of your voice and make it strong, clear, and attractive.

MAKING INTRODUCTIONS

The idea of introducing people is simply to make them known to each other. It isn't your job to turn it into a friendship. That's theirs. There is a protocol to making introductions correctly, and remembering the right way to do it is actually very easy.

Precedence is given to ...

- age,
- then gender,
- and finally, social pre-eminence.

That's right, Granny gets precedence over Lord Doolaly! The one exception is when a party is being held in honour of someone. Everyone gets introduced to the guest of honour, although it hardly needs to be said: in England, no one outranks the Queen.

- So, a younger person is introduced to an older person.
- Men are introduced to women; a boy to a girl.
- A titled man to a woman, unless he is significantly older.

- Joe Bloggs to someone with a title, such as a Lord, Doctor or Professor Whomever.
- Jane Smith to Lady Lala, or to the Marketing Director of your company

Now in social settings, it can be hopelessly difficult to answer the question, who on earth is more socially pre-eminent than whom. And in the desperation to work it out, it can all start to get pretty vulgar. Relax.

Assume this. Everyone starts from the premise; we're all equals and deserve equal respect. That is good enough for anyone with social grace and good manners.

More often than not, the context helps.

- At a work party, your mate from another department would be introduced to your boss.
- If you don't know someone is titled, the two most important rules, age and gender, will always stand you in good stead.

If people are overly uptight about these things, they probably need reminding they plop and wipe their own arses just like the rest of us. At a psychological level, they are overly-identified with that part of themselves that can't see beyond their 'role' in life or the external status indicators such as what they have.

The socially graceful know one's 'true self' is never increased by what we have, nor diminished by what we have not. We can all be a little snobbish sometimes, but civility is about developing your own self-worth. It's what gives you the strength and maturity to over-ride your base self and show

consideration to others, regardless of whom they are or what their background.

- Ask yourself the question, “Who am I?” and listen to what you prattle off. Name, age, occupation, rank, religion, nationality, ethnicity. You might even add your beliefs, your perceptions, your mental images, and your emotions. Then ask yourself, “Is that all that I am?” In truth, there’s something much more enduring and powerful, that ‘space’ inside of you that is self-aware. The more in touch and familiar you are with this part of yourself, the easier is it is to have a sense of humour and a confidence that enables you to keep things de-personalised and not take offence at what others say – a tremendously useful way of standing back, particularly when you come across the snobs and bigots that are an inevitable part of life. Powerful stuff!

Getting back on track ...

- Always start with the name of the person to whom the introduction is being made.
- Then say the name of the person being presented.

Formal Introductions

It’s easy to think that just because there’s a lot more social mobility in society these days, everyone is pretty casual. Think older and well-to-do people, as well as established institutions. They tend to remain bastions of the more formal.

- In these circumstances, introduce people using the person’s title and surname.

"Mrs Montague, I'd like you to meet Dr Turlington?"

- It's incorrect to then repeat the names backwards. So *don't* say...

Mrs Montague, Dr Turlington. Dr Turlington, Mrs Montague."

- More and more often, even in quite formal settings, people are introduced without titles, but you'll notice, people continue to use both a person's first name and surname.

Eleanor Smart, this is Jonathan Ray."

"How do you do Miss Smart?"

- Don't then assume you can then use a person's first name straight away. It is better to wait until the person invites you to use it, at which point do.
- A woman's marital status has no bearing on her business status, and if you don't know how she styles herself in the business setting, introduce her using Ms, or in England, it often remains Miss.

Introducing Couples

- When you're introducing a couple in a social setting, say the names of both individuals to whom the person is being introduced, traditionally with the woman's name first. You may then mention their connection.

"Mrs Grand. Mr Grand. This is Mr Frederick Freckles."

"Chloe, James. I don't believe you've met Oliver Gin."