



# focalvocal

Welcome, Bienvenue and Herzlich Willkommen to  
**VocalPoint**

FocalVocal's Free Monthly Newsletter

VocalPoint: **Issue 3**: November 2006

Welcome to the third issue of VocalPoint! The FocalVocal team and I are delighted that you are interested in receiving up to date news about FocalVocal and reading articles written by us about current issues within training today.

If there are specific questions you have regarding your training needs or areas that you think are worthy of investigation, we would be happy to hear from you and see if we can help out by doing some research and writing an article.

In this month's issue of VocalPoint Chris Robinson will be letting you know how to manage change, but first of all

## **What's on?**

### **In-house taster sessions**

FocalVocal is currently offering free of charge in-house taster sessions, a perfect opportunity for you to test drive FocalVocal's method of training and our skills. If interested please e-mail [monica@focalvocal.co.uk](mailto:monica@focalvocal.co.uk)

A recent two-hour taster session conducted at PKF (UK) LLP proved hugely successful and thought provoking dialogues regarding combating nerves by 'thinking in pictures' when presenting ensued.

*'PKF invited FocalVocal to deliver a taster session on Beginners Public Speaking. The attendees found it to be informative, developmental and fun. The presenter and actors struck the right tone from the very start and allowed the participants to contribute which helped maintain their focus. It was a thoroughly worthwhile session.'*

John Watkins Director of Training and Development PKF (UK) LLP  
Accountants & business advisers

### **FocalVocal Taster Sessions 2006 -2007**

1. Beginners Public Speaking with Monica Lowenberg
2. Assertiveness with Helen McNeill
3. Managing Change with Chris Robinson
4. Giving and Receiving Feedback with Chris Robinson as from Nov '06
5. Work/Life Balance Helen McNeill as from Nov '06

## 6. Media Training with Gareth Rubin and Monica Lowenberg as from April 2007

FocalVocal taster sessions are two hours and fifteen minutes in length, conducted at your premises by one trainer and two actors, one session can train up to 18 persons.

### **What's on Offer?**

One free hour session of personal effectiveness training with Monika Key, particularly useful if you think a trained and experienced outsider, can help you see the wood from the trees.

For further details and to find out in greater detail the benefits of coaching, see Monika's article *Personal Effectiveness Coaching for Executives and Managers* under <http://focalvocal.co.uk/publications.html>

With a passion for helping others improve the quality of their lives, Monika trained to become a Life Coach, training with 'Coaching by design', as well as qualifying with distinction from the Life Coaching Academy, Europe's largest coaching organization. She is a member of the Association for Coaching, the UK's leading body for coaching.

*"Monika has constantly been able to help me shape my thoughts positively and see things from a different (and better) perspective. A big advantage of working with Monika is that her style of coaching is not 'text-book' which I find refreshing and invaluable. She has a very relaxed, easy-going style and I would have no hesitation recommending her to anyone what was looking to improve any area of their life."*

AA - Manager, Major Retail Company

If interested please e-mail [monica@focalvocal.co.uk](mailto:monica@focalvocal.co.uk)

### **What's New?**

#### **Corporate Entertainment**

A number of FocalVocal actors such as Karen Bartholomew and Geoff Cotton perform shows to corporate clients. From January 2007 Karen Bartholomew will be offering a new show 'Raise the Spirit' a light-hearted look at the world of wine, led by wine expert (or so he thinks) Angus Tarte.

In the meantime Geoff Cotton, corporate entertainer and compère, is currently offering an act featuring songs, sketches and stand-up comedy.

The songs and sketches are all original and are accompanied by guitar or pre-recorded backing tracks. Song titles include 'I'm An Old James Bond', 'The Vegetarian Blues' and 'Why Can't You Be Like Us French?'

Geoff is also able to offer 'tailor-made' songs and stand-up comedy routines, following a suitable brief from the client. In this way his set can be 'personalised' for your audience...to the amusement of your colleagues!

For more details and an example of a 'tailor-made' song, contact [monica@focalvocal.co.uk](mailto:monica@focalvocal.co.uk)

### **What's coming up?**

#### **December VocalPoint**

Karen Bartholomew, script writer and experienced role-player will be entertaining us with a light-hearted piece for the festive season, but before autumn changes to winter here's Chris with a bit of advice on how to manage change:

## **Goodbye and Hello!**

Life is a series of exits and entrances. Familiar doors close behind us as we face another, different day. Exciting, boring, worrying, challenging.

When Shakespeare had Hamlet musing, 'whether to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune', life was mostly brutish and short. Today, life is usually much longer, but can be just as brutish. We live in a world, where major changes happen at a bewildering speed, causing upheaval in busy lives. And even the choices made freely, can be stressful. Ask anyone who has recently moved home.

Whether these changes happen at work or in our private lives (or both), they can be psychologically devastating if the processes are not understood. There is therefore a huge pay-off for those who are prepared to invest time and energy in exploring the major issues involved.

Many changes happen to us, others we choose. In either case, whether the change is at our discretion or not, we invariably have to deal with two sets of issues. First, is the pain of loss. As we go through life we lose things, youth, parents, friends, looks, jobs, mobility, possibilities, love, and in the end, life itself. We have to learn to let go of the people and things we cherish when they are taken away or when we decide to leave them behind us. Secondly, we have to learn to cope with an unfamiliar future, a future we may not want or don't know how to handle. Overnight, the familiarity of our comfort zone may vanish leaving us floundering in an alien world.

At precisely the time when we need a clear head and the equilibrium to make important decisions, strong emotions may scramble our brains and our stress levels may go into orbit. Shock, denial, fear, anger, bewilderment, grief and depression are some of the more common experiences faced by people coping with sudden change.

This emotional roller coaster is sometimes referred to as the grieving process, not least because grief is central to the process of letting go. Our ability to understand our emotions (self awareness) and to manage them (self management) are two of the four main components of EQ – emotional intelligence. Current research is suggesting that EQ is rather more important than IQ in the make up of good managers and leaders and, unlike IQ, EQ can be enhanced by learning. (The other two components of EQ are the awareness and management of our relationships with others). The research also strongly suggests that our emotions are 'designed' to help us. So, it is important to understand the healthy connection between thinking and feeling, between mind and heart and the way these should work as a partnership for each of us.

Facing an unknown future, whether reluctantly or willingly, needs both wisdom and courage. We need to know ourselves, what motivates us, what daunts us, what makes our various comfort zones so appealing and difficult to abandon. This exploration, is of help whenever we need to gather ourselves to step out in faith at the start of a new chapter in our lives. A set of criteria to help clarify what we want, and a set of practical tools for making it happen, are essential for any change to truly take place. The starting point for such a journey has to be the conviction that we are doing the right thing and that our quest is congruent with our values and longings.

Shakespeare penned Hamlet only two options – to suffer or to end it all. In doing so he prefaced one of the great tragedies of literature. Fortunately, life today is generally kinder and provides us with a greater range of options. Hope, peace of mind, serenity, laughter, joy, to name but a few. What are you ready to settle for?

Chris Robinson is FocalVocal's Management Development Trainer and an NLP Master Practitioner

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*FocalVocal works with businesses in the private and public sector who wish to improve their communication and management skills. Businesses who*

- *know that a dynamic, interactive learning environment is the most successful in helping you to retain newly acquired skills and be confident to apply them*
- *are bored with courses where you get to sit, but don't actually get to do*
- *have found it to be a bonus to have trainers and actors who are native English speakers but are also bi-lingual in German and French*
- *like the challenge of working with professional actors to test out new skills in a fun, non-judgemental environment*

*If you think the same, then get in touch with FocalVocal today!  
Please feel free to forward VocalPoint to anybody you feel would find it of interest.*

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