

COLBY WING

— COMMUNICATION COACHING

ANYONE CAN READ OUT LOUD. YOU'RE GOING TO DO MORE THAN THAT.

CHARACTER VOICE LAB

Six tools. One build sheet. Eleven drills. By the end of this you'll be able to make two characters sound completely different — using nothing but your own voice.

12 MISSIONS

ANY STORY

OUT LOUD, EVERY TIME



COURSE MAP

WHAT'S INSIDE

1 THE SIX TOOLS

What a voice is made of

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Tone drill

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6

VOICE TOOLS

Pitch, pace, tone, volume, pauses, endings. There is no seventh.

1

BUILD SHEET

Five questions that decide every voice choice you make.

0

STORIES REQUIRED

Bring whatever you're reading. The method fits any page.



START HERE

THE **BIG** IDEA

A character voice isn't a funny noise. It's six decisions — and every one of them comes from something you already decided about the person you're playing.

STEP ONE

DECIDE THE PERSON

Who are they? What do they want? What are they hiding? Answer that first, before you make a single sound.

STEP TWO

SET THE SIX DIALS

Pitch. Pace. Tone. Volume. Pauses. Endings. Each one gets set because of your answers — not because it sounds cool.

STEP THREE

SAY IT OUT LOUD

Every page in here is meant to be performed, not read silently. If your mouth isn't moving, you're not doing it.

CHARACTER FIRST. VOICE SECOND. THAT ORDER IS THE WHOLE LESSON — EVERYTHING ELSE IN THIS BOOK IS PRACTICE.

THE SIX TOOLS

Every character voice you'll ever build is made of these six. That's it. There is no seventh one.

TOOL 01

PITCH

How high or low your voice sits.

WHAT IT TELLS US

How old they are. How big they are. How safe they feel right now.

TOOL 02

PACE

How fast the words come out.

WHAT IT TELLS US

Whether they think someone's about to interrupt them.

TOOL 03

TONE

The feeling hiding under the words.

WHAT IT TELLS US

What they really think of the person they're talking to.

TOOL 04

VOLUME

Loud, soft, and everything between.

WHAT IT TELLS US

How much room they believe they're allowed to take up.

TOOL 05

PAUSES

Silence you chose on purpose.

WHAT IT TELLS US

Whether they're in control of the moment — or losing it.

TOOL 06

ENDINGS

How completely you finish each word.

WHAT IT TELLS US

How hard they're trying. How much they care about being understood.

SAY IT **FIVE** WAYS

One sentence. Five different people saying it. Nothing changes but your voice — and the sentence means something new every time.

SAY THIS FIVE TIMES →

I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D COME.

RELIEVED

Let the breath out on "didn't." Voice goes warm and drops. Slow down — you've got time now.

ANNOYED

Clip every word short. Punch "didn't." Flat, no warmth, jaw tight.

SUSPICIOUS

Slow on "you'd." Tip the end up like half a question. Don't finish the thought.

DELIGHTED

Pitch jumps on "come." Fast, no pauses, a laugh sitting just under it.

HEARTBROKEN

Almost no volume. Long pause before "come." The last word barely makes it out.

WHO IS THIS?

Answer all five before you make a sound. Everything about the voice comes out of these.

WHO ARE THEY?

Not their name. Their job in this scene — the one who's waiting, the one in charge, the one who got left behind.

WHAT DO THEY WANT RIGHT NOW?

One thing. Something they could actually get in the next two minutes.

WHAT ARE THEY HIDING?

Everybody's hiding something. This is where most of the voice comes from.

HOW DO THEY FEEL ABOUT THE PERSON THEY'RE TALKING TO?

Bigger than them, smaller than them, or the same? Do they even like them?

WHAT HAPPENED ONE SECOND BEFORE THE FIRST LINE?

You can't start a scene from nothing. Give yourself a running start.

SET THE DIALS

One rule: every setting has to come from an answer on the last page. If you can't point at which one, it's a random guess — go back and pick again.

PITCH

Higher or lower than your normal voice?

PACE

Fast, slow, or all over the place?

TONE

What's really going on underneath?

VOLUME

How much room do they take up?

PAUSES

Where do they stop, and for how long?

ENDINGS

Crisp and sharp, or soft and dropped?

THE TEST: READ ONE LINE TO SOMEBODY WHO HASN'T SEEN THIS. ASK THEM WHAT YOUR CHARACTER WANTS. IF THEY CAN GUESS — YOU BUILT A PERSON. IF ALL THEY CAN SAY IS "THEY SOUNDED GRUMPY" — YOU BUILT A MOOD. GO AGAIN.

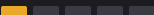
SIX VOICES, **READY** TO GO

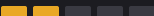
These aren't characters from a story — they're positions anybody can be in, in any scene.

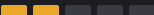
THE ONE WHO'S DONE WITH THIS

WANTS: TO BE FINISHED.

HIDING: HOW MUCH THEY STILL CARE.

PITCH  Low. Barely moves.

PAGE  Slow and even.

VOLUME  Can't be bothered.

TONE Flat. Giving you nothing on purpose.

PAUSES Long. They don't mind the silence.

ENDINGS Soft. Words just kind of stop.

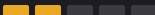
THE ONE WHO WANTS SOMETHING

WANTS: A YES.

HIDING: HOW BADLY THEY NEED IT.

PITCH  Lifts at the ends.

PAGE  Quick, then waits.

VOLUME  Soft — pulls you in.

TONE Warm. Leaning forward. A bit too friendly.

PAUSES One — right after the ask. Let it sit.

ENDINGS Sharp on the ask. Loose elsewhere.

THE ONE IN CHARGE

WANTS: TO BE LISTENED TO.

HIDING: NOTHING. THAT'S THE POINT.

PITCH  Drops every sentence.

PAGE  Unhurried. Never rushed.

VOLUME  Steady. Carries.

TONE Neutral. Being nice would be a favor.

PAUSES Before they speak. They make you wait.

ENDINGS Every last consonant lands.

SIX VOICES, **READY** TO GO

Try all six. Then build your own with Mission 03.

THE ONE HIDING SOMETHING

WANTS: TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT.

HIDING: ALL OF IT.

PITCH  A bit high. Too even.

PAGE  One beat too fast.

VOLUME  Carefully normal.

TONE Friendly. Slightly too friendly.

PAUSES In the wrong spots — mid-sentence.

ENDINGS Too perfect. Like it was rehearsed.

THE ONE WHO'S THRILLED

WANTS: TO TELL YOU RIGHT NOW.

HIDING: NOTHING AT ALL.

PITCH  High. Big jumps.

PAGE  Words crash together.

VOLUME  Up, and climbing.

TONE Bright the whole way through.

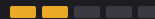
PAUSES None — until right before the best bit.

ENDINGS Sloppy in, razor-sharp on the payoff.

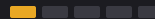
THE ONE PRETENDING TO BE CALM

WANTS: TO NOT LOSE IT.

HIDING: THAT THEY ALREADY HAVE.

PITCH  Pushed down. Tight.

PAGE  One. Word. At. A. Time.

VOLUME  Too quiet for this.

TONE Mild on top. Pressure underneath.

PAUSES Long — used for breathing, not effect.

ENDINGS Clipped right off. Over-controlled.

THE **CONTRAST** TEST

One line. Six characters. Exactly the same words every time — your voice does one hundred percent of the work.

SIX TIMES. NO CHANGING THE WORDS. →

I WONDER IF YOU COULD HELP ME.

DONE WITH THIS

Barely even a question. Pitch falls on "help."
You already know the answer's no.

WANTS SOMETHING

Lift on "could." Pause after "me." Then wait —
don't fill the silence.

IN CHARGE

An order wearing a question's clothes. Pitch
drops. Don't ask — announce.

HIDING SOMETHING

Too fast, too smooth. Eyebrows up. "Help"
arrives half a beat early.

THRILLED

Bouncing. "Wonder" gets the jump. A laugh in
it — like this'll be fun.

FAKE CALM

Slow. Level. Each word set down separately.
"Help" almost sounds like a threat.

MARK UP YOUR SCRIPT

Real performers write all over their scripts. Once you've found a great read, these marks are how you keep it — so it happens on purpose next time, not by luck.

MARK	NAME	WHAT YOU DO	LOOKS LIKE
/	BREATH	Grab a quick breath	<i>"By the time / the door opened"</i>
//	PAUSE	Stop. Let it land.	<i>"She laughed. // Then she didn't."</i>
↑	PITCH UP	Lift the end	<i>"You're serious ↑?"</i>
↓	PITCH DOWN	Drop the end	<i>"I already knew ↓."</i>
BIG	LOUDER	Fill the whole room	BIG <i>"Everyone, stop."</i>
soft	QUIETER	Make them lean in	soft <i>"I never told anyone."</i>
slow	STRETCH	Draw the words out	slow <i>"It was... already... gone."</i>
fast	RUSH	Pick up the speed	fast <i>"andthenheranforit"</i>
<u>word</u>	PUNCH IT	Hit this one hard	<i>"I said <u>never</u>."</i>

"By the time / the door finally opened // everyone in the room ↑ had already decided **slow** what they were going to say ↓."

FIND THE SPEED

Three speeds. One sentence. Only one of them actually works.

TRY ALL THREE →

BY THE TIME THE DOOR FINALLY OPENED, EVERYONE IN THE ROOM HAD ALREADY DECIDED WHAT THEY WERE GOING TO SAY.

✗ TOO SLOW

By the time the door...

EVERYONE FINISHES YOUR SENTENCE BEFORE YOU DO

✗ TOO FAST

Bythetimethedoorfinallyopened...

EVERY WORD CAME OUT. NONE OF THEM LANDED.

✓ JUST RIGHT

By the time the door finally opened / everyone in the room / had already decided what they were going to say.

CLEAR, IN CONTROL, STILL SOUNDS LIKE A REAL PERSON

BIG ROOM, **SMALL** ROOM

Volume isn't about being loud. It's about telling everyone how big the room is and how close your character is standing.

FILL THE ROOM

"EVERYONE — STEP BACK FROM THE EDGE."

REACH THE BACK WALL. OPEN YOUR THROAT, DON'T JUST PUSH HARDER. THIS PERSON EXPECTS PEOPLE THEY CAN'T EVEN SEE TO LISTEN.

ARM'S LENGTH

"don't look now — he's been standing there the whole time."

BARELY LOUDER THAN A BREATH — BUT EVERY SINGLE CONSONANT STILL LANDS. QUIET IS NOT THE SAME THING AS MUMBLING.

NOW SWAP THEM. SAY THE LOUD ONE QUIETLY AND THE QUIET ONE AT FULL BLAST. BOTH SHOULD FEEL COMPLETELY WRONG — AND BEING ABLE TO FEEL THAT IS THE WHOLE SKILL.

LET THE **SILENCE** WORK

The pause is usually the joke. And it's almost always the drama.

✗ NO PAUSE

"She opened the box. It was empty."

FLAT. TWO FACTS IN A ROW. NOTHING HAPPENED TO ANYBODY.

✓ WITH THE PAUSE

"She opened the box. **HOLD — 2 BEATS** It was empty."

EVERYONE LEANS IN DURING THE SILENCE. THAT'S WHERE THE STORY ACTUALLY HAPPENS.

★ THE BIG ONE

"AND BEHIND THE DOOR WAS **HOLD — 3 BEATS** ABSOLUTELY NOTHING."

THAT PAUSE IS THE PUNCHLINE. RUSH IT AND YOU THROW THE WHOLE LINE AWAY.

10 TONE DETECTIVE

Nine lines. Pick a tone for each, write it in, then say it that way. Here's the trick — the words never tell you the answer. You decide.

SARCASTIC

AMAZED

FRUSTRATED

WORRIED

HOPEFUL

SMUG

SHOCKED

OKAY-WITH-IT

EXCITED

1 "Well. That went exactly how I expected." _____

6 "I told you this would happen." _____

2 "You — you actually did it." _____

7 "Oh. Oh no." _____

3 "I've explained this three times now." _____

8 "It's not what I wanted. But it's mine." _____

4 "It's fine. Everything is fine." _____

9 "Wait — say that again?" _____

5 "Maybe. Maybe there's still time." _____

COVER YOUR ANSWERS. PERFORM ONE. LET THEM GUESS.

SCENE SITUATIONS

Four scenes with no story attached. Drop any two characters in — yours, or two from Mission 04.

SAME ROOM, DIFFERENT WANTS

TONE & PACE · 2 CHARACTERS

One of them wants to leave. The other wants to talk about it. Neither one says so.

DON'T PLAY THE ARGUMENT — PLAY THE WANT. LET THE ARGUMENT BE WHAT EVERYONE ELSE NOTICES.

THE FLIP

PITCH & PAUSES · 2 CHARACTERS

Character A starts out in charge. By the last line, B is. Nobody announces it.

THE FLIP HAPPENS IN THE PAUSES, NOT THE WORDS. FIND THE EXACT SECOND IT TURNS.

NICE WORDS, MEAN MEANING

TONE VS. WORDS · 1-2 CHARACTERS

Every line is perfectly polite. Every line is an attack.

THE WORDS ARE THE DISGUISE. YOUR VOICE IS THE TRUTH. NEVER LET THEM MATCH.

THE REVEAL

VOLUME & PAUSES · 1 CHARACTER

Halfway through, your character finds something out — and can't unknow it.

MARK THE EXACT WORD WHERE THEY GET IT. ONE VOICE BEFORE. A DIFFERENT VOICE AFTER.

PICK A DARE

Run the scene again under one of these. They break habits — which is the only reason they exist.

THE QUIET DARE

Do the whole scene at half your normal volume. The lines that suddenly get harder? Those are the ones you were faking with loudness.

THE FREEZE DARE

Add one three-second pause somewhere you'd never put one. Did it make the moment bigger — or just slow? Both answers teach you something.

THE STATUS DARE

Play it as the most important person in the room. Then the least. Change nothing but your voice.

THE SLOW-MO DARE

Say every line at half speed. Then keep it on only the two lines that really earned it.

THE SECRET DARE

Decide one thing your character isn't saying. Don't tell anyone what it is. Run the scene — then ask them to guess.

THE MASK DARE

Your character feels one thing and shows another. Pick both. Hold the mask the whole time — then let the real one leak out exactly once.

THE MONOLOGUE

One paragraph. Three runs. A different job each time — same words, every time. Record all three and listen back.

"Every single time, it's the same. I ask one question — one — and suddenly everybody's busy. Nobody looks up. Nobody answers. I stand here holding the whole plan by myself, and you want to know why I'm short with you? I'm not angry. I'm tired. There's a difference, and one day you're going to learn it."

1

LET IT BURN

Fast, clipped, jaw tight. Every sentence is a complaint you've made a hundred times. Don't play angry — play out of patience.

2

CLEAN ENDINGS

Same read, but every T, D, K and P lands completely.

single

question

suddenly

holding

short

tired

difference

3

FIND THE TURN

It changes direction at "I'm not angry." Two-beat pause in front of it, then drop your volume. The last two sentences are a different person.



FINISH LINE

CAN YOU DO IT YET?

Tick them off honestly. Anything you can't tick tells you exactly which mission to run again.

THE SKILLS

- ☐ I can name all six tools without looking.
- ☐ I can say one sentence five ways and have someone name each one.
- ☐ I can say what my character wants in one sentence.
- ☐ I can point at a voice choice and say where it came from.
- ☐ I can hold a three-second pause without rushing it.
- ☐ I can be quiet and still be understood.

THE PROOF

- ☐ Two of my characters sound different to someone who can't see me.
- ☐ I marked up a script and got the same read twice in a row.
- ☐ Someone guessed what my character wanted from one line.
- ☐ I recorded the monologue three ways and can hear the difference.
- ☐ I tried a dare and it changed something.
- ☐ I built a character with Mission 03, on my own.

WHAT'S NEXT

OPEN A BOOK.

RUN MISSION 03.

This was never really about the drills. It was about having a method you can point at any page, in any story, forever.

Original teaching material. Every practice line, character, drill and mark in this deck was written for Colby Wing Communication Coaching and contains no material from any published story.