



# THE LavaCon Conference

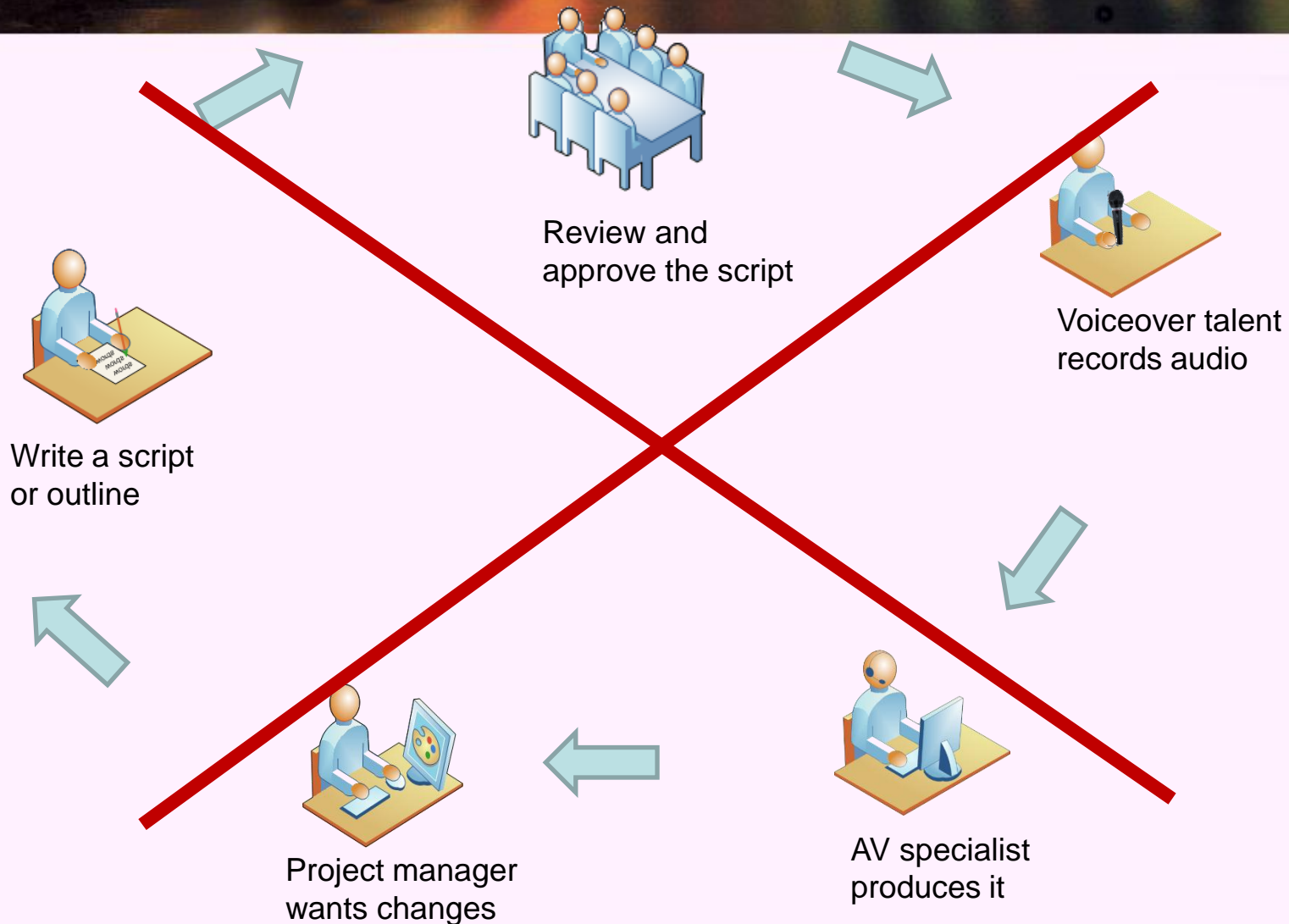
Portland, Oregon

## Producing Professional Sounding Audio in Video Tutorials

By Tom Johnson



# The Traditional Model



# Microphone & Suspension Mount



**Electro-Voice RE-20**





# Mixer/Preamp



# Acoustic Environment

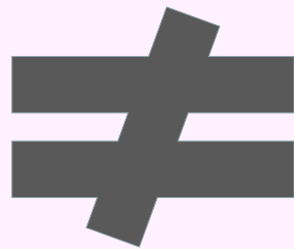


**cloth walls • no fan • unschedulable • isolated • lockable • windowless**





# The Problem



# Many Ways to Read a Sentence

She stole the money.

The door is open.



# Voiceover Samples

[P](#) [S](#) [T](#) [E](#)



Bill Bryson, Short History



Ryan Trimble, Les Mis

*Note: Each of these files links to the owner's website where the files are located.*



Harlan Hogan, Demo



Kurt Hills, real speech



Connor, TechSmith



Lisa Greenewahl, Demo



Natasha, Wicked Prince



Chip, Aesop's Fables

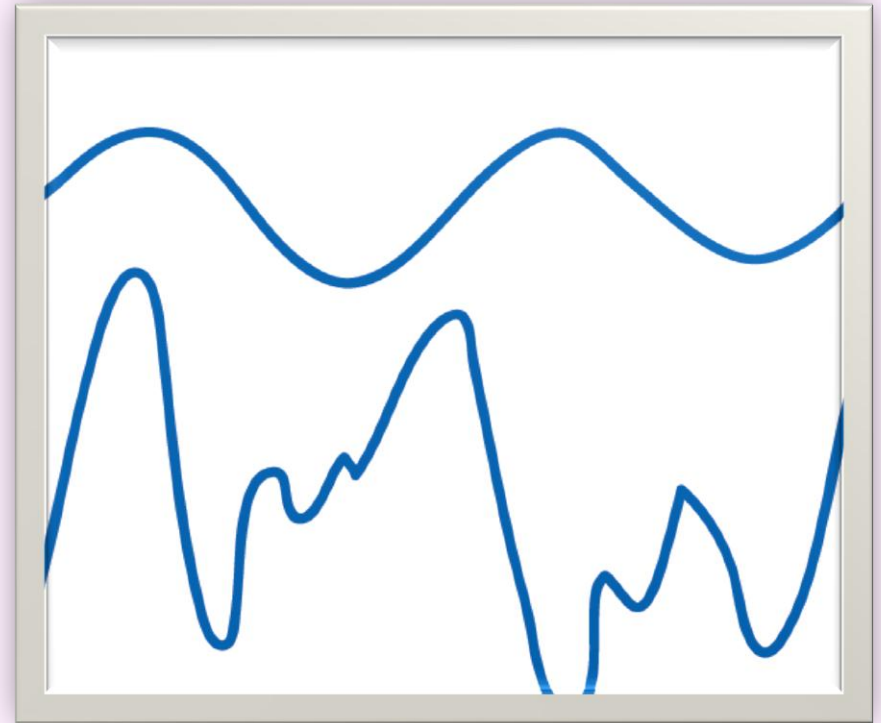




# Quality #1: Pitch Variation

## **Pitch variation:**

Vary the pitch of your voice from high to low to mid-tones as you read.



# Tip: Read Ahead



Michael Allen Such a Voice Video Clip. Youtube. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W\\_6fpMBcFCc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_6fpMBcFCc)



# Pitch Variation Practice

Say the word hippopotamus several times, changing the pitch as you switch between some of the syllables.

Now read your practice passage (next slide), changing the pitch as you read. Scan ahead several words to better anticipate the copy.





# Sample Copy to Read

Once your WordPress site goes live, don't leave your files dormant for months without updating them. Remember that the web is an evolving and dynamic place. On the web, nothing stays the same for long. WordPress software evolves, browsers change, plugins (hopefully you're not using too many) get updated, and exploits -- sometimes very malicious ones, exploits that wipe out your entire database -- get discovered.

All of these changes can affect your site. If you leave your site alone too long, you may find one day, when you log in to write a post, that you can't, because your site has been hacked. You may find that your database is filled with spam and that visitors can't even go to your web address without seeing a virus warning.

When this happens, you will spend a considerable amount of time restoring your site. You'll also spend a lot of time looking at log files, trying to figure out how in the world the hacker got in. Because until you figure it out, the hacks will happen again and again.



This site Have Been Hacked by Tn\_Scorpion



Behind Every Success There is Enemies

# Quality #2: Speed

**Speed:** Vary the speed of your voice from fast to slow to paused as you ready copy.





# Tip: Find Thought Groups

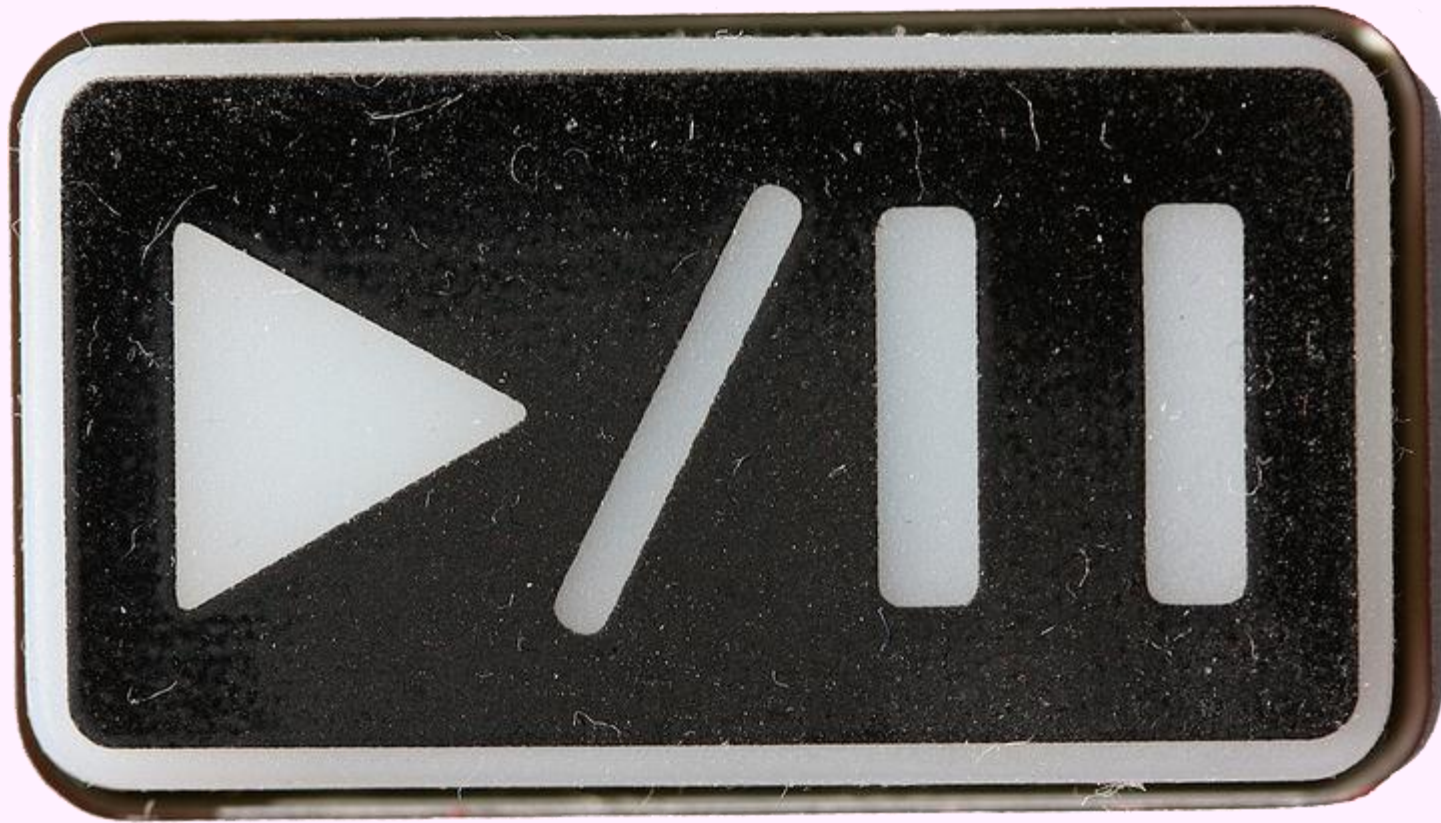
“In conversation, we speak in ‘thought groups.’ Our brains formulate chunks of speech as we think about what we’re trying to say. Research indicates that vocal tics, e.g. “uh,” “um,” “well,” and other short fillers, are simply that—verbal place holders used to buy time for our minds to generate subsequent thoughts and then articulate them.

“You can use this “thought groups” concept to locate the natural phrasing and breath points in a piece of copy. It can be especially helpful with long-form scripts that contain long technical explanations, scripts that simply may have been lifted from a technical document written for the eye...not the ear.”

— Peter Drew, “Finding the Natural Rhythm in Voiceover Copy”



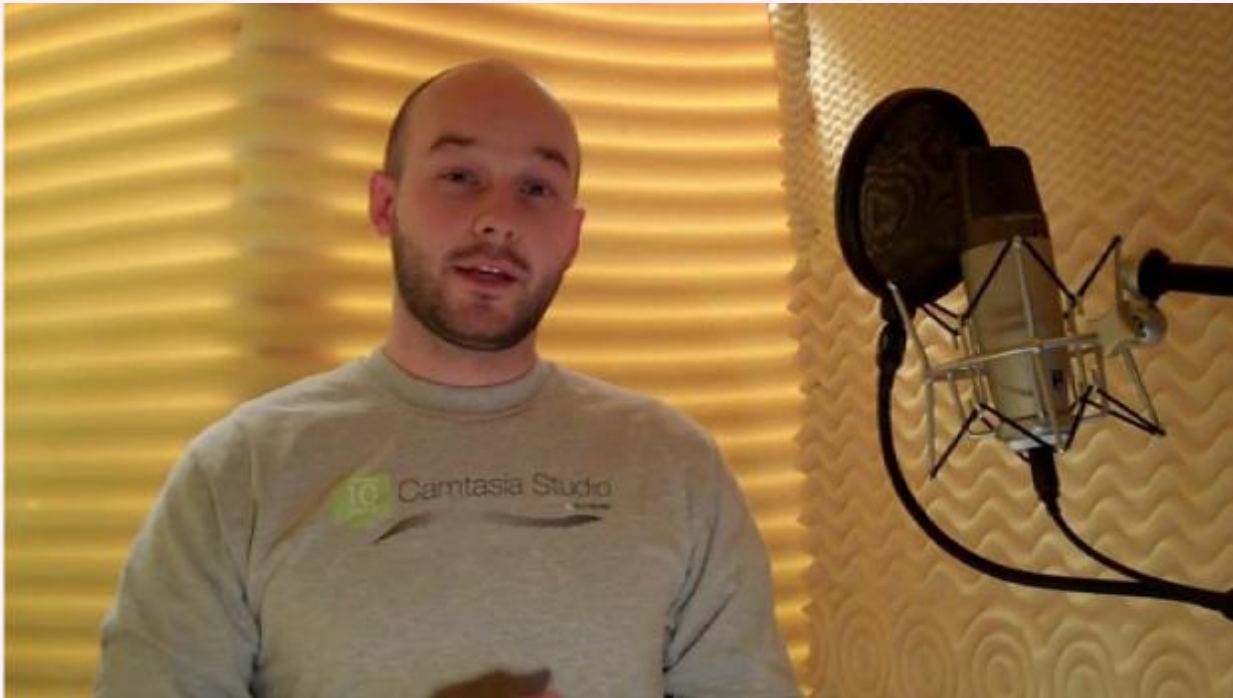
# Tip: Learn to Pause



Flickr. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dominicotine/7862424222/sizes/c/>



# Tip: “Learn” to Breathe



TechSmith. Youtube. Tips for Voiceovers. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6hXoU426Hc>





# Practice with Speed Variation

Practice reading your script (next slide) with a variation in speed. Woodshed your copy to identify a few clauses you want to read a bit faster. Put a circle around these clauses. Now insert a few slashes to represent possible pauses.



# Sample Copy to Read

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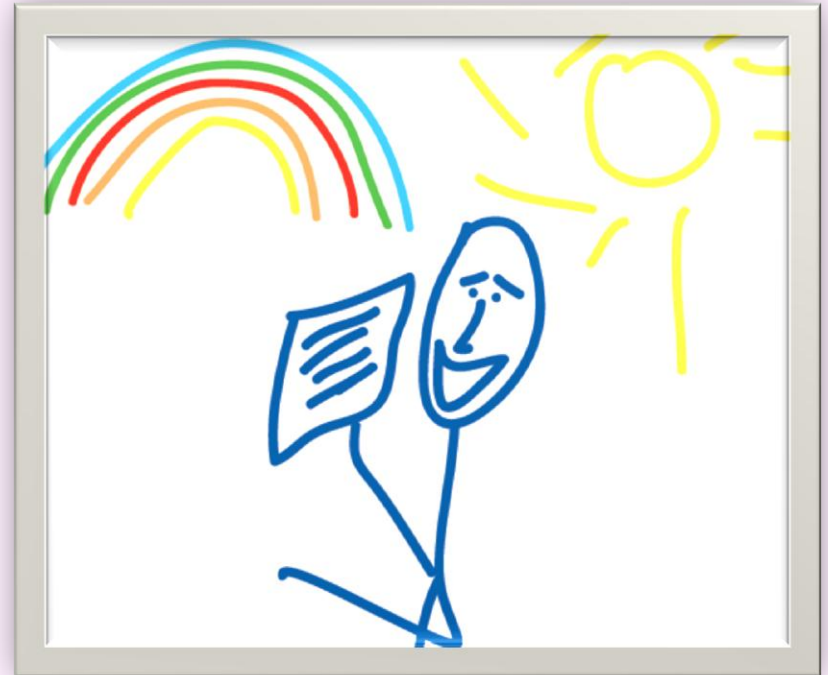
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# Quality #3: Tone

**Tone:** Infuse your voice with a sense of warmth and friendliness as you read.

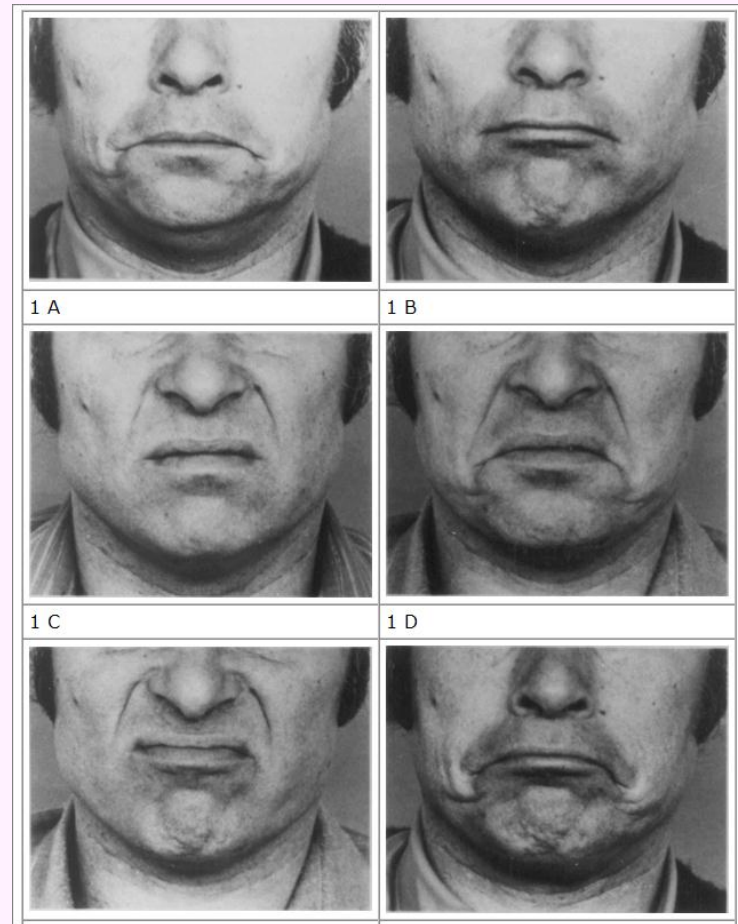




# Tip: Smile

“As Ekman and Friesen researched the different facial muscular movements, they began to realize that just making the facial gestures affected their emotional state. For example, making an angry facial expression caused their heart rate to start beating faster and their hands to get hot. When they made expressions of sadness or anguish, they started feeling bad inside.”

— Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink*



# Tip: Smile



Dan Levine. Suchavoice.com. [http://www.suchavoice.com/Page/Technique\\_Tips](http://www.suchavoice.com/Page/Technique_Tips)



# Tip: Imagine an Audience



Flickr. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sepblog/3676361977/sizes/m/>





# Practice with Tone

Smile and think happy thoughts for a minute.  
Now keep your smile on and try to read the  
same copy (next slide).



# Sample Copy to Read

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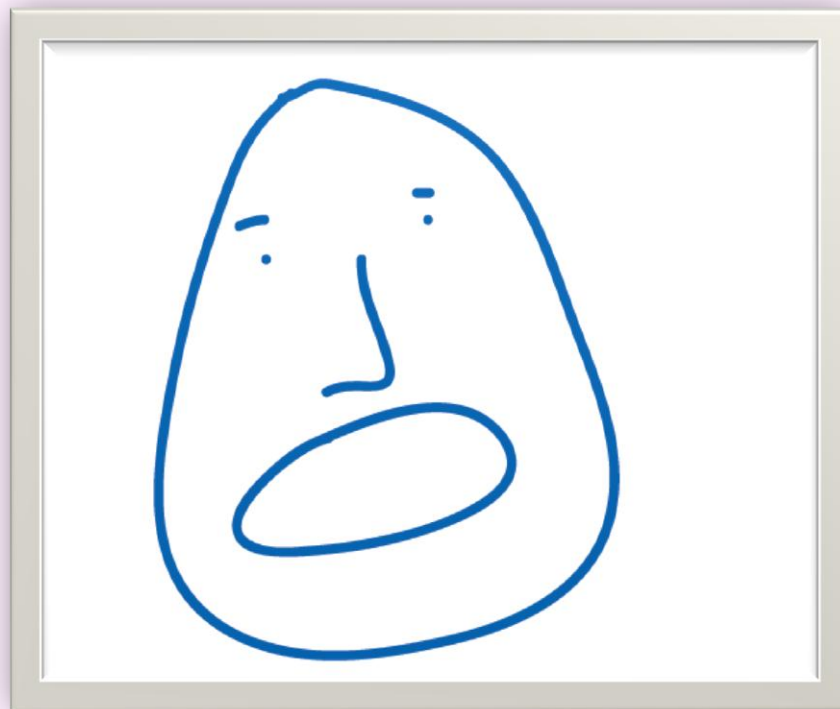
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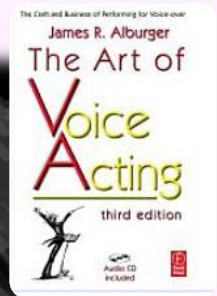
# Quality #4: Enunciation

**Enunciation:** Open your mouth wider when you read words, making sure to pronounce the text crisply and clearly.





# Tip: Open Your Mouth



# Practice with Enunciation

Bite on a pen while reading your sample script (next slide) with as much enunciation as possible. Now remove the pen and read the copy again.



# Sample Copy to Read

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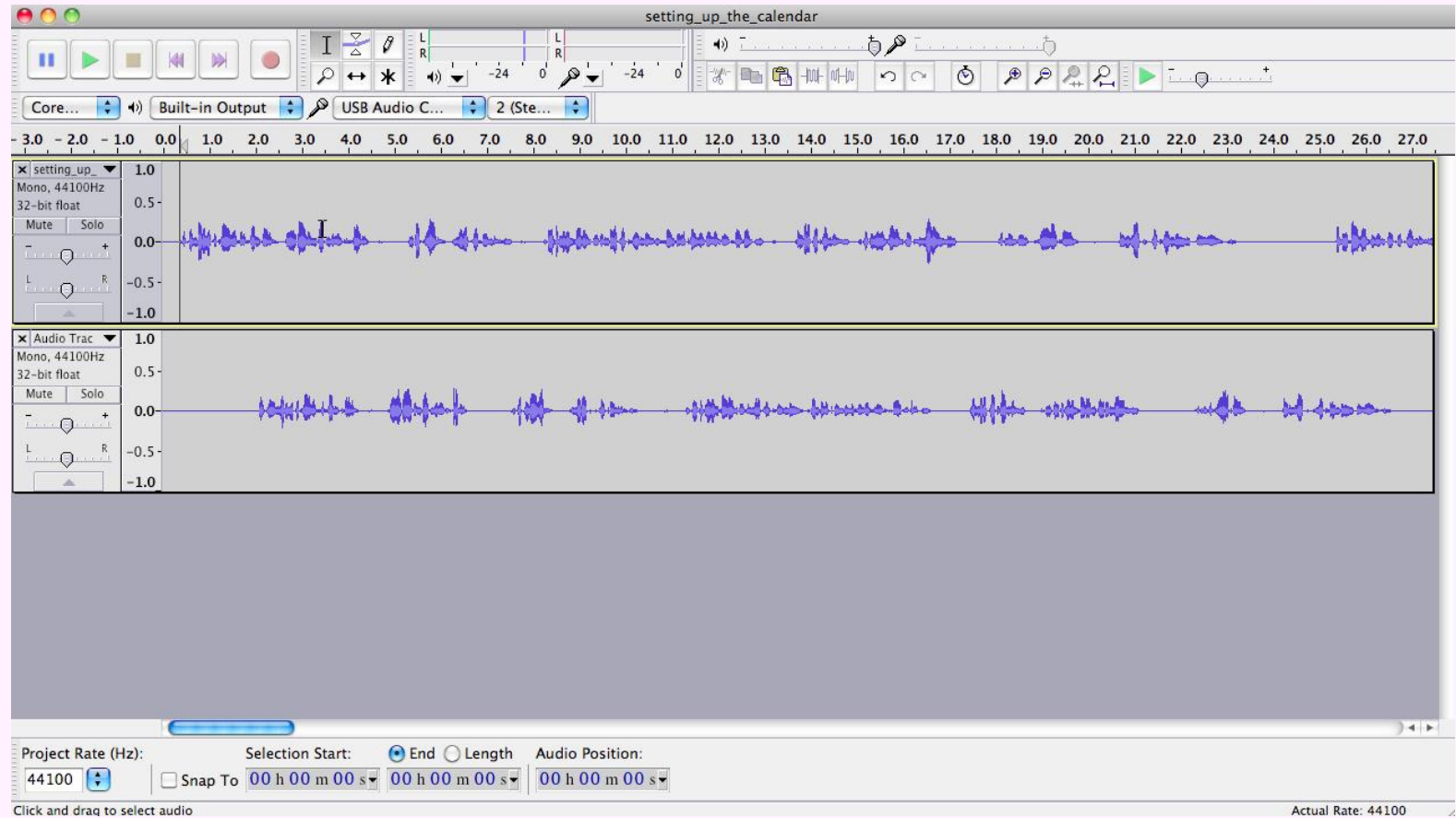


# My Recording Process

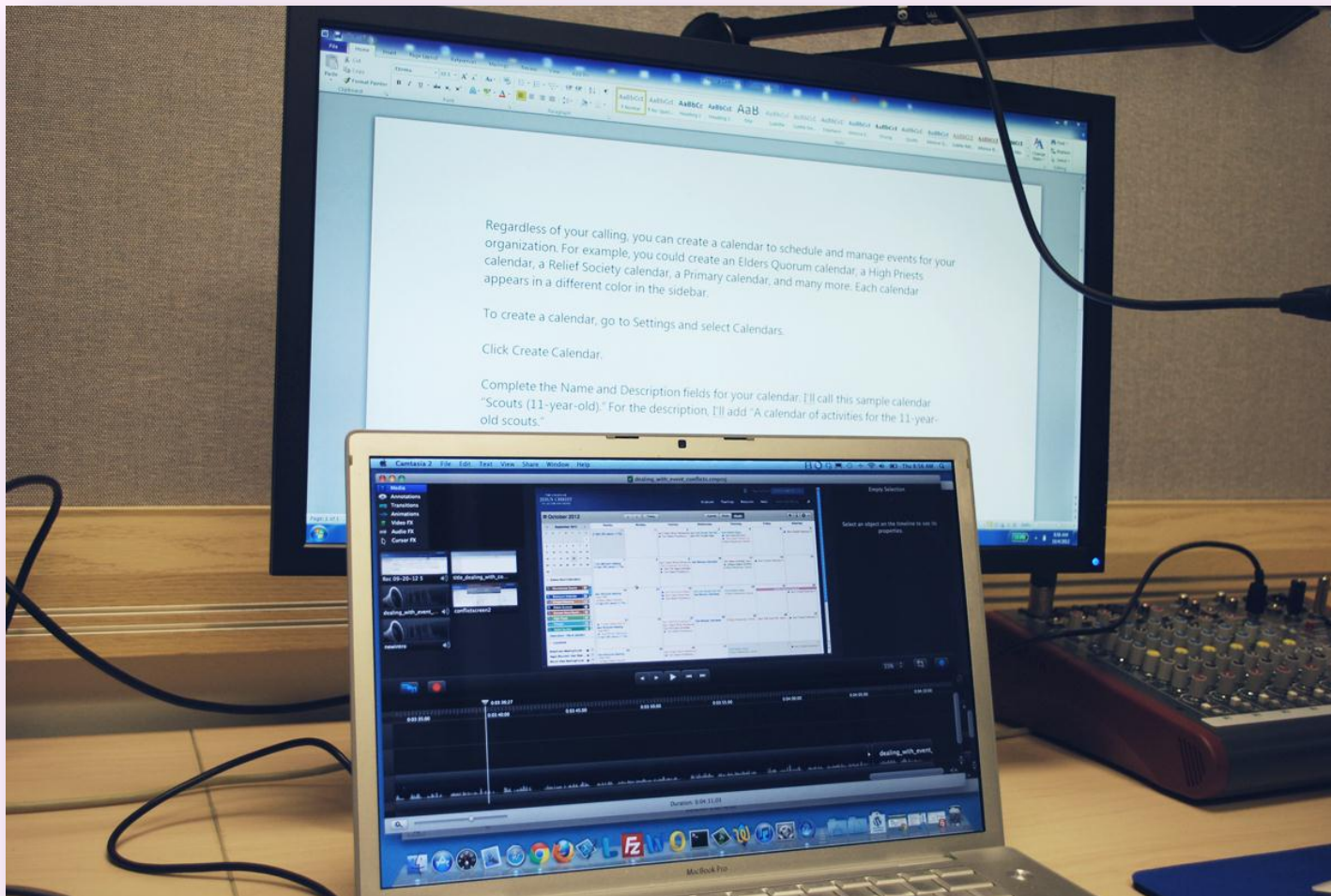
1. Record demo and script simultaneously.
2. Separate out audio track and import it into Audacity.
3. Note timing on script.
4. Re-record the audio script keeping in mind the pauses.
5. Line up the original recording with re-recording.



# Dub Over the Original Recording



# Dual Monitors





# Major Voiceover Qualities

- Pitch
- Speed
- Tone
- Enunciation





# Contact Information



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