

Your Voice & Your Confidence

JUDY RODMAN, VOICE COACH & VOCALIST

Women of Note - Interviews by Sue Painter

Introducing Nashville vocalist and songwriter Judy Rodman

I'm Sue Painter with The Confident Marketer, and today we're going to talk about voice. Your voice.

- What does it have to do with your business?
- How does it help you project your leadership, your confidence, your ability to attract others to your business?

JUDY RODMAN BIO

We have a real expert with us today to talk about voice. She is my friend from Nashville, Judy Rodman. Judy has over 5 decades of success in the entertainment industry. She is

- An award-winning vocal coach
- A sessions singer
- A chart-topping recording artist
- A stage and TV performer
- A musician
- A public speaker and author
- A hit songwriter and studio producer
- An artist development consultant.

Judy is the host and creator of the podcast & blog All Things Vocal.

Judy is the host and creator of All Things Vocal blog, which has almost two million views. Her podcast of the same name has an average of 1000 listeners per episode.

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

Judy's unique vocal training method is called Power, Path & Performance

Judy has been named the best vocal coach by Nashville Music Pros, and the Vocal Coach in Residence by TC Helicon's Voice Council Magazine. She uses her vast experience and her intuitive diagnostic skills to teach her vocal training method, Power, Path, and Performance, to singers and speakers online around the world.

Judy's clients include major and indie artists, recording artists and labels, artist development companies, touring background, and studio session singers, public speakers, media personnel, and voiceover talent.

Her students and recording clients have appeared on the Today Show, Letterman, Ellen DeGeneres, The Voice, American Idol, America's Got Talent, the Grammys, CMA, ACM, and MTV award shows, and on the New York times bestseller list. Besides on her blog and podcast, you can find Judy at JudyRodman.com. Judy, we are so happy to have you here today, thank you so much for your time.

WOMEN, VOICE, AND CONFIDENCE

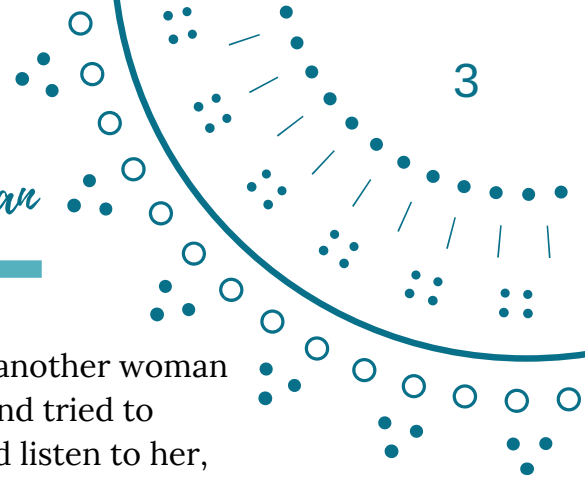
Judy, you live in Nashville, and I have to say I have a special place in my heart for Nashville since I was born there.

Judy: Oh! I didn't know that!

Sue: I'm one of the few Nashville natives, and then I moved away. But we're talking today about women in business and voice. I'll tell you a little bit about why I wanted to talk with Judy about this. When we lived in Tennessee I was the Executive Director of a research institute's program.

I had to go up to Washington and make proposals and sales presentations a lot. It was in the nuclear industry, and I was always the only woman around. I quickly learned that I had to modulate my voice, make it lower and really speak with authority, or I would be discounted by all the PhD nuclear physicists who were in the room.

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



I also sometimes would be in meetings where there might be another woman or two, we were always in the minority. If that woman came and tried to present with a very high squeaky voice none of the guys would listen to her, no matter whether she was a world expert or not. So that's when I first started noticing. I asked Judy to come talk with us today. You know from her bio that Judy is a wonderful asset to the voice community and to the musical community.

Judy: Yeah, this is a fascinating subject, it really is. There's a whole cottage industry about this now, they call it audio branding. And there's a podcast by my friend, Jodi Krangle, called Audio Branding. You should look that up too. You want me to go ahead and start in?

**The voice exists to
deliver messages.
Period.**

Sue: Yes, go ahead, I'm all ears!

Judy: Here is the very first thing people get wrong, because our crazy world is so competitive. When you think about the voice and about how your voice is and how good it is, you think that the real thing that's important is if your voice is "good." If it sounds good, okay.

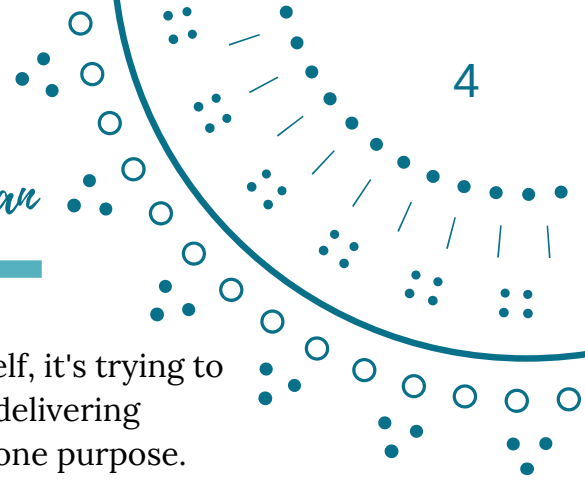
But that is a relative term. It's like sitting on a horse saying, "Horse walk" or "Horse go. Good." You know, it's like, what does that mean?

The automatic nervous system runs the voice. So if we don't give the voice a little more clarity than that, what it does is, at best, just makes a bunch of sound. Some of the sounds could be really good.

But instead of that, what I ask people, which surprises singers and speakers, is, "What are you trying to do with your voice?" They will answer, "Well, I'm trying to sound good." The voice doesn't exist to sound good. The voice exists for one reason, and this is where we start. The voice exists to deliver messages. Period.

Sue: Yes, whether spoken or sung.

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



Judy: Your voice makes sounds. Even if it's moaning for yourself, it's trying to sooth your own body. That creates endorphins. Your voice is delivering messages. We've really gotten away from understanding that one purpose. The reason you start with this is that the automatic nervous system takes cues from following the voice, like a bouncing ball. So let's follow the bouncing ball a bit.

So now you know you're supposed to be communicating messages. The next question you need to ask is, to whom am I communicating? It's so hugely important! And the real magic, the little thing to know – the ninja tip – is never communicate to all them.

**Ninja tip – never
communicate to all
of them.**

Always, only communicate to the one. To the one heart. What heart is that? The heart that the words that are coming out of your face are actually to. Now, if you can't see the audience, say you're doing a teleseminar or the spotlight's in your eyes on stage, and you can't see the audience in front of you, you have to make that heart up. You have to play with the little spot, the little atom of spot in your imagination, and you have to flesh that heart out. This is acting technique. Real acting is very brave and very honest. It is, as Sanford Meisner says, Behaving authentically in fictional circumstances."

Sue: Which is difficult to do.

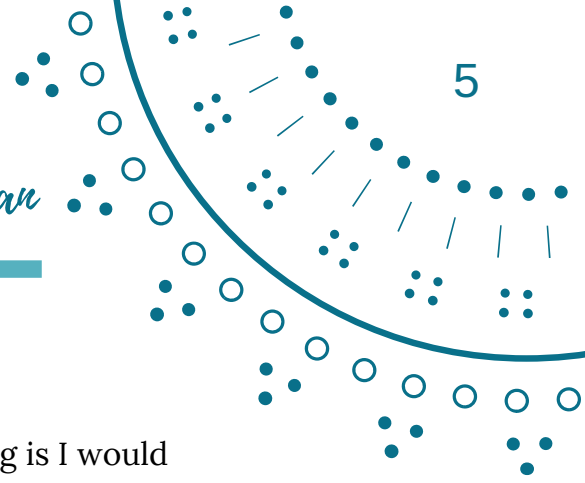
Judy: It seems so, but not really, not if you use your imagination. We do it all the time. Think back to when we were kids, playing with our imaginary friends.

When you communicate to the one you're going to be a laser beam. If you communicate to everyone, whether you're singing or speaking, you're going to be a flashlight beam. A flashlight beam can't cut butter. A laser beam can cut a diamond.

Sue: It's really interesting that you say that because in those years that I spent a lot of time in DC, walking the halls and doing proposals, I was very successful at it. So much so that I began being tapped to be the one who would always go up to get the money, as it were. People wanted to know how I could do it, and I used to say, it's because I can read the room.



Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



Judy: Exactly.

Sue: But really, now that I'm listening to you, what I'm realizing is I would read the room and I would immediately find the decision maker. And I would just shut out everybody else and talk to that guy.

Judy: There you go. That tunnel vision.

Sue: And it would work. It was like, the rest of the room kind of fell away almost. And it was like energy, me to him, my eyes and my voice were focused there. I didn't consciously do it, I just did it.

Judy: That is exactly right. If it is to the whole room, you make it to the one heart of the room. When I work with professors in college, or when I work with ministers who are preaching I tell them to make the heart the whole room. Same for business people who are holding seminars. What I tell them is make the whole room a heart, just exactly what you're talking about, Sue. Make them one heart, make it like one heart. Singers do this too, think Bano, think Garth. Everybody in their audiences feel like they just, they're just there for them. They make them feel that way. It's by the way they look to the listeners.

Sue: People will say "Oh, it was like he was singing just to me."

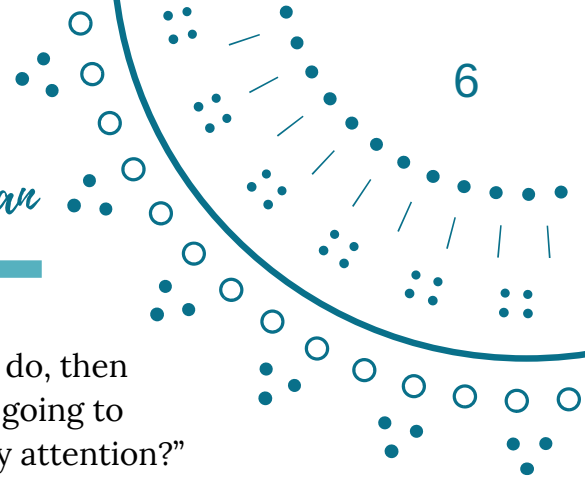
Judy: Exactly. That's real stage presence, whether you're speaking or singing, that is stage presence. When you do draw them in, it's not just a laser beam, it is a magnet on steroids. It pulls people in to your message.

Sue: I'm liking this because, as you know, I live in the energetic world. I work with my business clients and run my own business, following the energy of things. I've learned to do that over the years, and I have pretty present intuitive skills. I was interested in your bio to read that you talk about intuition as well.

Because actually, the world of music that you live in is certainly energy. I mean, everything is energy really.

If I am a woman business owner and I feel like I'm not confident when I go out and

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



market, or introduce myself, or talk about who I am, or what I do, then where would I start? Would I start by just thinking, “I’m really going to meet this one person and I need to make them the focus of my attention?”

Judy: I’ve got an exercise that I do where I show the difference in when you flesh this person out, this heart. The heart, it could be the heart of the whole room or the one person that’s the decision maker like you’re talking about, or even yourself in the mirror if you’re doing one of those talks. You know, like a monologue. You first have to figure out who that one heart is and make it real to yourself.

It’s especially hard to do when nobody’s there. If you’re doing a teleseminar and maybe you are doing that without the video. But think about how many times we have conversations on the phone. If we’re on the phone, the rest of the body might think it isn’t needed. But if you don’t use your whole body when you are on the phone you’ll sound like a zombie and you’ll get tired.

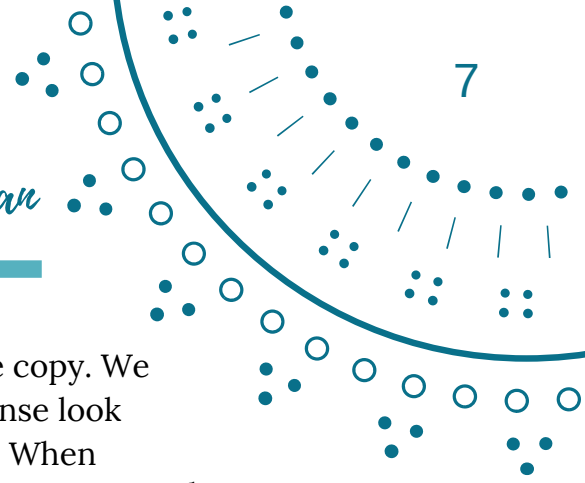
You’ll get vocally fatigued too. The bottom line is that you have to know who you’re talking to. Flesh that out. Then the second thing is that you have to know what it is that you want them to get from you. What is your message? What do you want them to feel at an emotional level? What do you want them to understand? Even if it’s just fun, if it was a joke.

What do you want them to feel at an emotional level? Not just a surface level, but what you want them to feel. Now the last piece of the puzzle that we don’t understand is that we make the mistake of focusing on how we feel. Nobody cares what you feel. It’s only about what you make that heart you’re talking to feel that makes your voice valuable.

I call it the prime directive for the voice, the brass ring. You have to get that your message is about what that heart you’re communicating to feels. It’s not enough for you to just spew out your facts or your truth or your message. That’s a narcissistic vocal.

It’s not enough to focus on how you feel delivering the message. The thing that makes your voice valuable is that you get a response. That’s the end game, to get the response that you want.

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



Sue, I know that you know this too. We do that when we write copy. We think, "what do we want them to do?" What would their response look like? Maybe we want them to hit the buy button on a product. When you're speaking to a room, what would it look like if you got the response that you wanted? It might mean that everybody freezes into silence. That's way more powerful than most polite applause. You're looking for that nonverbal body language that says, "You got my attention."

Sue: It's so interesting that you say that. When I first started the Confident Marketer almost 20 years ago now I just was calling it Sue Painter Consulting. That to me was nothing special, I could see people's eyes glaze over. I went to make a speech in Knoxville, where I used to live. There were 22 ladies in the room and I decided that they needed to introduce me differently. So I did a different bio. The bio said, "Sue is the person who can help you feel confident in your marketing." And immediately I felt and saw 22 pair of eyes lock on mine.

I stood there and thought, "I'm changing the name of my business to The Confident Marketer, which is how that was born." Sure enough, at the end of my speech, 18 of those 22 women were my clients.

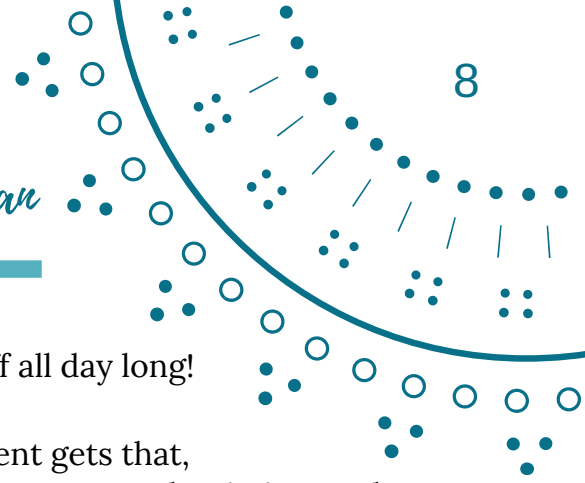
Judy: Oh my gosh! That's getting a response.

Sue: It's because I got an emotional connection. It wasn't even me making an offer, it was just someone introducing me with a bio. So it's interesting that you say this, because from a business perspective you're asking, "What do you want? What kind of a response do you want out of them?" You're not talking right now about, I want them to sign the deal. You're talking about I want an emotional response from them, from which the deal follows.

Judy: Exactly. I want to get their immediate attention. Like if you're singing, you know, a song about, don't you want me back. The response you're talking about is not immediately that they fall into your arms. The response could just be a widening of the eyes.



Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



Sue: I love this kind of stuff. I could talk about this kind of stuff all day long!

Judy: It's got to be really real, okay? Then, after my voice student gets that, we get to talk about the voice itself. The tone of voice, and the nuances, the timing, and the phrasing, and all that kind of stuff. Well, how do you know how to do all those things? It starts with who am I talking to. Getting to the prime directive, the brass ring. What response do you want? That tells you what tone of voice you need. Can we do a little acting exercise?

Sue: Oh sure. Of course. Yes.

Judy: All right, okay. So I'm going to say four words. I'm going to use you, will play with me here?

Sue: Of course, I'll play.

Judy: Okay. We use the more nonsensical stuff, sort of silly stuff. Because sometimes silly gets us past the automatic nervous system. You know, past the conscious mind. It lets you really learn something at a deeper level.

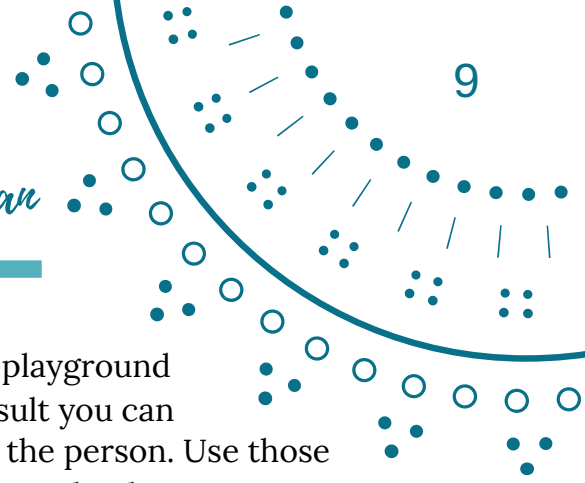
Sue: Yeah, the energetic level.

Judy: Exactly. Yes. So we're going to use four words. I'm going to give you four words and you will have four different movie scenes. It will be pretty quick. I'm going to tell you what the scene is, where you are when you're saying the same four words. And then I'm going to tell you who you're talking to, and then you'll have a specific response that you want, all right?

Now the first scene is that the four words don't mean anything. You don't really understand what the words mean. You're not really talking to anybody. So this first scene you are not really talking to anybody and the words don't mean anything. The four words are, "I am an aardvark."

Sue: I am an aardvark. (Speaking listlessly.)

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman



Judy: Second scene is that you are now back in school, on the playground and somebody just called you an aardvark. That's the worst insult you can imagine being called. You are mad and you want to intimidate the person. Use those same four words to intimidate them. You do not want to be an aardvark.

Sue: I am an aardvark. (Speaking menacingly.)

Judy: Exactly! You're saying it like, "What does that make you?" Right? Exactly.

Now the next movie scene is that a nurse has just drawn your blood and found out that you are indeed part aardvark. And you're so happy about that, because that means your mama was part aardvark. You were always secretly hoping that was true. Okay, talk to the nurse and you're going to want to make her smile.

Sue: I am an aardvark. (Spoken with wonder.)

Judy: Sue, you're a natural! You really could do some acting. The very last movie scene is you are at the door of the aardvark club and they won't let you in because they don't believe you are an aardvark.

Sue: I am an aardvark. (Spoken with authority.)

Judy: Sue, you're the best! You're the best aardvark I ever heard. Now let's reflect on this. Did your body language change?

Sue: I think it did.

Judy: Yes, when you gave us different responses your body language changed big time. Your face changed. Your hands changed. Your body posture changed. Everything changed. Did your tone of voice change? Yes, absolutely it did. Could somebody on the phone tell the difference in the messages you were delivering with the same four words? Yes, they could.

See what I do is help people understand what this wonderful thing they have in their neck is for. That's part of it. The second thing is the psychology of your voice. And then, the

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

physicality of it, the physiology of it. Teaching you the vocal technique gives you more access to the variables then your automatic nervous system can pick from to deliver the message.

I'll tell you, there are some really rotten speakers that have done very, very well. The reason is that they know what I've just told you. They're using their toolkit a whole lot better than some people who are far more talented. Speakers who do well are zeroing in on their prime directive. "Who am I talking to? What response do I want from them?"

Sue: I grew up as a musician, not a singer but primarily an instrumentalist. It sounds like you are saying that the voice is not just monotone. It has a range. It's like an instrument. You can make that instrument do different things, whether it's the piano or another instrument. So really, the voice is a tool, but it's also an instrument that we can practice and learn to modulate and learn to have more technical ability to change it.

Judy: Right. I can expand on the variables, the colors, the tone colors that people have. I can also at the same time help protect them from vocal strain, from their own vocal success. For instance, working with posture. Getting your breath support and breath control balanced.

The other thing is learning to opening your throat. Did you know that your throat opens three ways? Here's where your face matters. It's actually better that when a person is on the phone for that person to be using their face and their hands. Their hands because it works through the rib cage a certain way. The face is important. Let us do another little experiment.

Sue: Okay.

Judy: If you raise your eyebrows, what happens in your nose? It opens up, right?

Sue: Yes, it opens up, the nostrils flare out.

Judy: If I say one, two, three, and then I just raise my eyebrows and say it again, you can hear the difference in my voice. I've almost doubled my resonance. One, two, three. One, two, three.



Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

Sue: Yes, it sounds more throaty.

Judy: Yes. So which one's going to deliver the message that you want to deliver. Not the one with no eye movement.

Think of a math teacher who is teaching and she's got one more hour and she's done. She's thinking, "Oh my gosh, let it be over." This math teacher is not really into it. She has no facial expressiveness. The point is that eye language is hugely important to the voice, and also your jaw.

If you tend to be kind of insecure, then you're going to speak with more of a ventriloquist kind of voice. I can hardly do it. It's like the lips don't move much because the jaws are tight. Your jaw doesn't move. Try saying, "One, two, three." without moving your jaw much.

Sue: One, two, three, one, two, three.

Judy: Good! Now move your jaw like Forrest Gump. One, two, three. Feel the difference? You get more air in there for one thing. You're literally open, you know, your voice opens up, down, and back.

Your head coming back helps as well. You want to park your head over your tailbone, over your heels when you're speaking. You pull people in to you that way. Proper posture opens up your rib cage and it opens up your throat. Your throat opens, it has a ceiling which is the nose, the nose which goes all the way up to the eyebrows inside, and the soft palate. It has a floor which is tongue and jaw. Let the tongue be free so that it doesn't get tight. And then in the back, your C1 vertebra, if it goes back just a little bit, you can feel your ears open.

That little postnasal drip zone, when that area stretches open, all of a sudden you got access to resonance that you may never have known you've had. All these things instantly increase people's tonal options for the voice to pull from.

Sue: I'm thinking about the impact on a person's confidence level that this type of music training has. One of the things that is a big bug with me when school systems take music out of the curriculum, thinking that it is a "cost savings." I think that's not a cost savings.



Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

I think that my early immersion in being in the choir and performing and being a musician, gave me an understanding of sound and an understanding of the energy between people. Because as a performer, you you always feel that energy. We have such a lack of confidence anyway, in this culture, much less in business. So I'm thinking that many people with confidence issues didn't spend the first 10 or 12 years of their life embedded in music. You and I did. Our confidence levels are different. Personally, I strongly believe this is a disservice to our school children.

Judy: One thing that can increase somebody's confidence though, is to get outside themselves and make it about the person they're talking to. Seek that heart.

You got to ask yourself why does this person need what I'm trying to give them? That creates a reason that is other directed. If you bottle it up in your own body it just doesn't work. It's like sitting on the horse saying, "Please, please move good."

But if you are willing to go external to a heart when you are using your voice, then you can gain. Think about a really shy person who suddenly sees somebody who is about to get hit by a bus. Well, all of a sudden that real shy person is going to get a lot of confidence and go and try to save that person, using their voice and maybe their body.

So confidence can be a situational thing. Here are some of the things that make a person unconfident or insecure.

- They don't know who they are talking to.
- They don't know that their job isn't just to be "good."
- They don't know the tools they have to use their voice. They don't have access to their own instrument.

So that's where some training could help to get a person to open up. We can use psychology until you get used to speaking or performing in this way. At first, it can still can be kind of a butterfly producing, heady experience to go out in front of the public and feel like you might freak out. But you can act as if. Act as if.

Here's one little tip. If you do know why the person or group you are talking to needs what you have then act as if they're partially deaf as you speak or perform to them. You'll find that you articulate differently.



Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

Sue: Yeah, you will. That's interesting. I never thought about that before. I love what you say, that gaining confidence really means not worrying about yourself so much and focusing on the other person. I've found that when my clients who needed to market their business but avoided it because they felt unconfident, it was because they were worried about how they would look or how they would come across. Their worries were all focused inward. Yet if they started focusing on serving this prospect and maybe turning this prospect into a potential client, then a lot of that unconfident feeling fell away. It's hard to get people to make that leap, at least the first time. Then as they get practiced it gets easier.

Judy: I'll give you a story of a voiceover talent in New York who I was working with at one point. I remember that her big issue was that she was bored with her own work. She said to me, "I'm selling gym memberships, come on. How many hours day do I have to do it?"

We were laughing about it. And I said it's kind of boring. So we went through the little scenario and I said, "Okay, who are you talking to?" She replied, "All right, it's a woman, a middle-aged woman." So we went through a backstory of why she needed this gym membership. I said, "Well she has a terrible lack of confidence. She's gained too much weight. She feels like her husband was drifting. She felt like life was not worth living anymore. But you selling her that gym membership, you're going to save her life. You're going to save her whole trajectory by selling her a gym membership. Now go do that.

It changed everything, it changed their whole copy. She used that with other products. Here's the thing, Sue. If what you are selling is not good for whoever you're talking to, you have to get another product or another service.

Sue: In fact, I have a book about how to hold a sales conversation, and I talk about when not to make an offer. When the signs are right and when the signs are not right. I really love that. I mean, this is such a fascinating topic to me. It really is get outside of yourself and make that kind of energetic or heartfelt connection with the person you're speaking with.

It's funny to me that music has so much to do with basic business principles. Because in basic business principles, we're always told, make sure you're talking to the decision maker. That one right person. We're always told, go write an avatar as to who your ideal

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

customer is, and really flesh it out just like you were doing with the voiceover artist. It's fascinating to me. Everything's connected. Judy: When you start getting really good at it then you want to get even better. Then there's little things to work on. I'm working with an African American young man who is going to change the world. He's amazing, I want to meet his mama someday. She must be really special. He could not say his th's. They were dat and dis, and that was going to limit him. We worked on his th's and for the first time he's saying th's.

He sent me a testimonial and he said, "My life has totally changed now that I can say th's." He said, "I'm about to give a keynote in a room with a potential of several hundred people."

Sue: Wow! That's fabulous. I'm glad you brought that up because before we end, I have to ask. Me being from Nashville and having a Southern accent, it sometimes is commented upon. Not usually when I'm speaking, but in social situations. I always kind of get my backup a little bit. I'm usually thinking, "Look, you're from Jersey, I'm having a hard time understanding you." What do you advise? Do you feel like people should try to speak more without their accent or just let it roll because it is what it is?

Judy: I think that if it's affecting what you want to do in your life, address it. That's what I think. I'm working with somebody right now who is a public speaker. She is the daughter of a famous steel player, and she has a deep mountain accent. She has a sound where her R's are very harsh. She doesn't mean to sound harsh, it's her accent. Her R's are mostly like pirate R's. They were really back there in her throat. She loosened her R's up.

I had her pretend to be a little kid, remember when you couldn't say your Rs? She messed around with that for a long time. And finally in one lesson her jaw started moving around and now her R's are much more pleasant. Sometimes it's not the accent, it's one thing that makes the message sound harsh.

Sue: One of my own mentors happens to be a Cuban and immigrated to the United States. One day we were having lunch and he said, "Okay, we'll speak Spanish." In the end he said, "You're never going to be credible unless you learn how to say your, O." Drop your jaw, and it's like, O. It not like O, like you say, but it's O, O. Drop your jaw. Sure enough, I went to Mexico not long after that. And so I was doing this O thing and the people in Mexico were saying to me, "You've got a wonderful accent."

Women of Note - Sue Painter with Judy Rodman

Judy: I mean if you want to be a newscaster in Indiana, or you want to be an actor and you need to learn an English accent then that takes diction lessons and you really need to dig in. But for regular message delivery it might not matter. Again, who are you talking to? How do they need you to say it so that they can respond like you want them to? It just comes back to that, it always comes back to that.

The last thing to talk about is fatigue. Vocal fatigue has to do with posture. You have to control the breath. Fatigue comes from posture and can also come from a tight throat. If you use your core and the lats in your back, and flexibly keep yourself tall and open you will have less fatigue. Your body may be weary at the end of the day and you may get physically hungry, but your voice is going to feel great. So keep your lats back and keep yourself aligned over your center. That's where your power comes from.

Your power should come from your hips, not from your rib cage or your throat. We say, "Sing your butt off so you don't speak your throat out." Same for speaking, too.

Sue: If want to know more about this, or if they want to pursue working with you do they go to **judyrodman.com**?

Judy: Yes. You will find my contact information on the website at judyrodman.com. I love working with speakers as well as with singers.

Sue: Judy I am an awe of you. You have so much experience and so much wonderful knowledge for singers and speakers. I love that we ended up talking about the energy of things because that's my game, that's my jam. Thank you so much for your time.

Judy: Well I'm in awe of you. And so thank you so much for inviting me. It was great to be here!

