



# INSIDER GUIDE

TOP 10  
VOICEOVER  
MISTAKES THAT  
BEGINNERS  
MAKE



# INTRODUCTION

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Just as important as knowing WHAT to do in the VO business, is knowing what NOT to do! Being aware of the biggest classic mistakes ahead of time can really help you avoid them.

Some of these admonitions may seem obvious; others are basic concepts you can adapt to your style and business plan.

Do yourself a favour, print this out and post it in a place where you'll see it often.

## TOP 10 VOICEOVER MISTAKES

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By-no-means-complete, but essential list of VO mistakes:

### **#1 – Being undecided about your rate**

Do your research; many of us charge too little for our services. Or we are apologetic, defensive, blustering. When your rates are competitive and you present them confidently, an issue might not even arise. But if you must get into a conversation about rates, come *prepared!*

### **#2 – Believing all you need is an agent and you are in the black**

Of course, a good agent is invaluable in obtaining auditions for you that you'd not get yourself, but they will never be your only source of sessions. Look for contacts, keep networking, continue to market online and in person, and DO that cold calling you've been putting off. Don't rely solely on your agent.

### **#3 – Making your voice over demo when you are not yet ready**

You need practice, you need coaching, you need to know your voice and what it can do. In short, you need to be really prepared. If you pay for that demo too soon, it can be wasted money. And no demo is forever. Be ready to go through the process as often as the market demands.

**#4 – Not getting help with that first demo when you ARE ready! This is really a place for leaving it to the pros.**

You may think, “How hard can it be?” to plop down your voice with your own new equipment. This is a common mistake. However, believe me, studios bring experience, skill, and know-how to the process. You can’t be objective enough about your own demo, and you only get one shot at a first listen. Make it the best it can be!

**#5 – Failing to get that agreement in writing**

It is always vital to get something in writing. Memories of discussions and “agreements” can so easily change over time, with the potential to lead to uncomfortable and unnecessary conflicts. Plenty of voice actors don’t do this, but most clients don’t blink when you request it.

**#6 – Forgetting to practice – ALOUD – every day!**

It is absolutely vital to read aloud every day; you can get rusty in a just a few days without this exercise. Do your voice exercises, repeat your tongue twisters, exercise your face, and oh, yes, READ ALOUD EVERY DAY!!

**#7 – Not using TV and radio as an instant, powerful mechanism for practice.**

You have to know what is current and popular, and in demand. You must know what is playing on the air at any given time! So listen and learn from today’s commercials, listen to narration on documentaries and reality shows. Stay current.

**#8 – Forgetting the customer’s directives**

Within the expertise that you bring to any project, the client’s wishes still need to remain at the top of the to-do list. This is a service industry. Do it their way, and if you think you can do better ... make that your 2nd or 3rd take.

**#9 – Being difficult to work with**

This is an extension of Number 8, above. Be considerate and easy to work with. Listen to the requests of the customer and the engineer. Don’t be pushy. Follow up in a timely manner. Be in time, and on time. Never be arrogant.

Don't share info about the job with anyone else unless the client says it's OK. They may welcome the extra PR, or they may not want anyone to know.

### **#10 – Expecting instant success**

Don't lose patience with this process. Be persistent, and be prepared to reach out time and again. Stay on the radar of prospects. Take more classes, buy more coaching, and network endlessly. This is a business for tortoises, not hares.

