

When I was picked by TV Danmark and Rosegarden Studio to be a presenter on the Danish version of call TV, "Slå på tråden", I had no previous experience presenting on television. Admittedly, I wasn't a stranger to standing in front of a camera or to the theories surrounding the media industry. I've worked as a model for 5 years and have a bachelor degree in Media Studies but none of this had prepared or taught me what it's like to be live on TV. I.e. how to cope/react if there's a technical problem or how to make sure that nerves doesn't get the better of you.

And this where Pauline comes in.

2 weeks before "show time" me & my colleague was sent to Pauline's house for some intensive communication coaching. I didn't know what to expect but I was fascinated by what the day would bring.

Pauline started out by refreshing my memory by talking us through some basic communication theories e.g. first of all that communication is both a verbal & non-verbal action. So it isn't just about WHAT you're saying but also very much about HOW you say it. She also pointed out that if you have some troubles communication clearly, whether that's verbal or non-verbal, there are ways to deal with it. For me e.g. when I talk I sometimes talk too fast. Together, we identified the cause as being me being nervous and the symptom to be the fast talking. What Pauline taught me was how to deal with the cause as soon as the symptom began to show its ugly head. By using a simple technique I'm now capable of slowing down whenever I need to. All I have to do is make sure both my feet are touching the floor and that I breathe all the way down to my stomach (instead of just breathing on the top of your lungs). It sounds very simple and it is! But nobody had ever shown me how to do it before:-)

Another very crucial thing Pauline made me realize was that when presenting in front of a camera be true to yourself! Don't pretend to be someone you're not. She pointed out that I wasn't just hired to do the job I was picked i.e. the production company & the TV channel thought my personality was good for the type of programme I was about to present. So, if they have faith in me, why shouldn't I? In other words, if you believe & rest in yourself anything you do in front of the camera will look genuine and natural. And that's good TV!

One last trick Pauline gave us was to visualize the camera as being someone you're really comfortable & close to. And guess what, it works:-)

When the control room started to count down from 20 sec. before my first live broadcast I was so nervous I was nearly shitting myself (excuse my french). But as soon as I pictured the camera to be my dad it all just suddenly felt much more relaxed and comfortable.

Sure enough, it's true what they say that practice makes perfect but it's always helpful to have someone giving you the best tools possible for your "practice". And Pauline Van Aken is just the person you need to provide you with these tools.

All the best Pauline:-) Louise