

*TIPS on voicing your confidence

Voice coach Susan White has worked with architects such as Terry Farrell & Partners, and Squire and Partners, as well as contractors such as Kajima, Interior and Mace.

"I focus on people feeling comfortable speaking as themselves instead of putting on a persona. I try to revert them back to who they are when they're with friends. Most people – if they're motivated – are incredibly captivating. However, when they're in an office situation they put on their best behaviour.

"I do quite a lot of exercises, which can be a bit of a shock to the chaps, who don't believe you have to do anything below the head. But it's not about doing actorly things: I come from a marketing and communications background rather

than through RADA.

"What people need is credibility. When you stand up and speak, do you look as if you're having a good time? It's all about self-awareness. Some people are unaware that when they're saying red it's actually coming out blue.

"The advice I give is mainly for formal presentations, such as pitching for work, applying for planning consent or public meetings. But it's also for day-to-day work, such as running a project team of six companies in a room, or dealing with internal office situations. Some people are fantastic with external audiences, but not so good with internal ones."

Susan White runs her own firm, per-sona.

Log on to www.per-sona.com

