

# The essential of **communication for** oenologists

By José Miguel Dentinho



Good communication is important!

# Why?

It contributes to define the image of the wine, the company that produces it and the enology responsible in the market.

# Communication is important!

## **Dona Georgina 2005**

Producer: Quinta de Lemos

Wine Region: Dão

Price: **100 euros**



**Both had great  
classifications among the  
specialists**

**Two vintages, two great  
wines, two different stories  
– two different prices.**

## **Barca Velha 2008**

Producer: Ferreira

Wine Region: Douro

Price: **600 euros**



# Communication is important!

**Dona Georgina 2005** is from a small and young company: Quinta de Lemos. It was one of its first vintages.



The first **Barca Velha** was from 1952. It's a trade mark from Ferreira, a company with a long history, that belongs to Sogrape, the biggest portuguese wine group.

# What is communication? What are its objectives?

To communicate is to transmit a message in a way that is perceived by people (target audience) who receive it, in order to make them react in the desired direction.



In wine companies, the main objective is to sell wines, preferably more than once, because there are always new harvests and wines to be launched each year.

# What is communicated in the wine universe?

**Trademarks, wine  
companies,  
winemakers and  
viticulturists,  
*terroirs*, regions  
and countries**



# What to communicate, to always communicate and never to communicate in the wine world?

What you can and should always communicate in writing or orally:

The company and its people



# The company and its people

- **The history and good stories of the company and its wines and its punctual and generic successes in the market, always thinking about what most of the interlocutors want to hear.**
- **Mainly the stories of the responsible for producing the company's wines, owners, other winemakers and vine growers.**
- **Good stories, but always in small doses, just to help to catch the audience's attention:**
  - **Successful creation of new wines, entry into new markets, positive criticism in magazines of the specialty, spontaneous reactions of the public, etc.**



What you can and should always communicate in writing or orally:

Wines and the production process



# Wines and the production process

- The **characteristics of the wines and their quality.**
- Service **temperature**, appropriate **glasses** (if it's a more demanding public), better **partnerships with the food.**
- **Remaining details**, such as the way **the year passed**, the **vintage**, the **production process** and the **stage in bottle** are generally intended for people who are more interested in wine.

**(But there may always be one in the middle of the crowd)**

What should not be communicated:

Anything that damages the image of the company and its wines.



For example, **wine pallets returned** by the distributor **because of contamination**, or simply due to poor or **inconsistent labeling**, that don't respect the rules of the destination market

# What are the communication targets in wine business?



## Partners:

Distributors

Retail, Modern Distribution, Wine Shops and others, and HoReCa Channel (Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes and similar).

# What are the communication targets in wine business?

## The influencers:

Journalists, critics and sommeliers

## Other influencers:

Oenophiles/wine lovers  
(bloggers or not)

## General public

We are going to talk about the last three, those that involve direct contact with **people**.

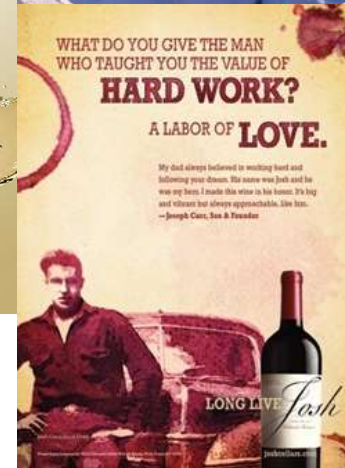


# Moments and methods of communication in the wine world

## Indirect Moments: Advertising and Institutional Communication.

### Advertising

It is essentially pointed to all targets, although it may be focused in niches through direct marketing.



## Institutional Communication

It is mainly targeted at specialized journalists, wine critics and sommeliers linked to social communication. **The main objective is to “keep the flame alive” in their minds and to appear in the Media.**

### It includes:

- **Releasing relevant news and images** about the wine company, its people and its wines (ex: launches, prizes in international competitions, presence and/or sponsorship of events, etc.).

### And should include:

- **Other relevant information** about the wine company and, additionally, its people and wines

\*The impact on the media of those communication actions can be evaluated through specialist companies.

# Moments and methods of communication in the wine world

## Direct moments:

**Wine press presentations (to journalists, wine press critics and other Media)**

These professionals have to be treated as such. It is very important to give them the **correct information** as quickly and effectively as possible, so that they can collect it and return to work.





# So:

- **All written supporting materials**, including the history and histories of the company and its people, the wines to be tasted and the respective technical data sheets, **should all be sent to them before/after the meeting.**
- **The taste must be prepared** for the number of people invited, with the wines at the correct temperature and the appropriate glasses clean, and without smells.
- **Never present too many wines.** Only those that are important at the moment. For example, the releases of the year and "little jewels", that appeal because of their quality and distinction.
- If the event includes **a meal, do not present the wines during** it, so that taste notes can be taken.
- The **meal** should be planned to be **served as soon as possible.** You should keep in mind that guests need to go back to work, especially if it's lunch.

# Examples of technical data sheets

## With essential information

### Adega de Pegões Red

Península de Setúbal, region where are located our wines, is characterized by a climate with great conditions. In this region, we have pozolitic and sandy soils, rich in water. With influences from Mediterranean and from the proximity of the Atlantic sea. This perfect harmony brings a great development to our noble grapes, perfectly adapted, that gives us marvellous quality wines.

**Classification:** Regional Peninsula de Setubal Wine  
**Type:** Red  
**Grapes:** Castelão 80%, Aragonez, Alicante Bouschet and Touriga Nacional 20%  
**Region:** Península de Setúbal  
**Soil Type:** Sandy Pozolitic

**Characteristics:**  
**Taste Note:**  
**Colour:** Ruby  
**Aroma:** While young it has a strong aroma of red berries. Evolving into spices after the third year.  
**Taste:** Soft in the mouth, with good quality tannin structure.  
**After Taste:** Median persistence and pleasant after taste.  
**Vinification:** Alcoholic fermentation in stainless steel vats at controlled temperature.  
**Aging:** None  
**Evolution:** Keep in very good conditions for 5 years.

**Analysis:**  
**Alcohol Content:** 13,0%vol  
**Total Acidity:** 5.0 gr. of tartaric acid  
**pH:** 3.6

**Recommended plates:** Hunting plates, meat plates and codfish plates.  
**Recommended Temperature:** 18°C  
**Conservation:** Fresh place, dark, with bottle lying down.



#### Bottling Details:

| Bottle Capacity (ml) | EAN Uni UPC   | Quantity of Bottles for Cases | Liquid Weight of each Case (Kg) | Brute Weight of each Case (Kg) | Case EAN SCC   | Quantity of Cases for Palette | Palette Weight (Kg) |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 375 ml               | 5603016163452 | 20 x 375 ml                   | 7,5 Kg                          | 13,8 Kg                        | 35603016163453 | 50                            | 690 Kg              |
| 750 ml               | 5603016133455 | 8 x 750 ml                    | 4,5 Kg                          | 7,4 Kg                         | 15803016133452 | 100                           | 740 Kg              |
| 750 ml               | 5603016133455 | 12 x 750 ml                   | 9,0 Kg                          | 14,4 Kg                        | 25603016133459 | 60                            | 864 Kg              |



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## With complete information



### PORTO FERREIRA DONA ANTÓNIA RESERVA BRANCO

**TYPE:** Fortified **CATEGORY:** Reserve **COLOUR:** White **TONE:** Golden yellow  
**DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN:** DOC Porto **REGION:** Douro  
**COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:** Portugal

**THE WINE**  
 In homage to 'the Ferreira's', the Dona Antónia range has now been modernised and strengthened with the addition of a Reserva Branco alongside the existing Reserva Tawny. There have always been white grapes planted in the Douro Valley. In former times, they were used to make wine with minimal character destined to be blended with red wines, lightening them in both colour and body. Today, our objectives are quite different. The winemaking team, led by Luís Sottomayor, specifically seeks out Upper Douro grapes worthy of reserve status to make the new Dona Antónia Reserva Branco, with the kind of acidity and structure that will ensure good ageing potential. 'The Ferreira's' herself was something of a pioneer in the Upper Douro, and record books of 1852 show that, as early as the mid-19th century, Dona Antónia was producing white wines that were the predecessors of this new white Porto Ferreira.

**TASTING NOTES**  
 Golden yellow in colour. It has an intense aroma, with notes of bitter marmalade, a floral quality, exotic wood and dried fruits and nuts, with a light, peppery and curry-like spice. The wood ageing adds nobility, complexity and the required richness.

**WINEMAKER:** Luís Sottomayor

**VARIETIES:**  
 30% Malvasia Fina, 20% Códrega, 20% Viosinho, 20% Rabigato, 10% Arinto

**WINEMAKING**  
 Porto Ferreira Dona Antónia Reserva Branco is made by the traditional Porto Wine method. The grapes were picked slightly over-ripe. After light crushing and destalking, they were macerated in the juice throughout the fermentation period, with the aim of extracting as many of the aromatic compounds from the grape skins as possible. The juice therefore underwent an intensive programme of pumping over, which meant that the desired compounds were completely diffused in the juice, while the skins were kept whole. During this phase, fermentation temperatures and densities were rigorously controlled so as to choose the ideal moment to add the spirit required to stop the fermentation, which depends on the grape varieties, ripeness and desired sweetness (medium in the case of our White Porto range). The balance of body and aroma was achieved by selecting grape varieties with the right characteristics, and choosing when to stop the fermentation. This determines the final sweetness of the wine.

**MATURATION**  
 After the harvest, the wine remained in the Douro, and during the winter underwent the first racking, at which time certain adjustments were made. It was transported to Vila Nova de Gaia during the following spring, where it began the traditional ageing process for Porto Wine, in oak casks of 640 litres, in Ferreira style. During this period, the wines are racked, analysed and tasted many times, which enables the winemakers to follow their progress, and begin to think about the blend. The final blend is chosen from selected batches that, when put together, have the taste profile of Porto Ferreira Dona Antónia Reserva Branco. To this end, we choose wines aged between 4 and 9 years so as to maintain the same style, with an average age of 7 years. After blending come the final touches before bottling.

**STORE**  
 The bottle should be stored upright, protected from direct light and excessive humidity, at a constant temperature between 16°C-18°C.

**SERVE**  
 Porto Ferreira Dona Antónia Reserva Branco is bottled ready to drink and does not improve with keeping for a long time. Ideal drinking temperature is between 10°C-12°C. Once opened, it does not need decanting, and will remain in good condition for around two months.

**ENJOY**  
 Porto Ferreira Dona Antónia Reserva Branco is good with soufflés, pâtés and desserts.

**TECHNICAL DETAILS**  
 Alcohol: 20% | Total Acidity: 3.84 g/L (tartaric acid) | Sugar: 120 g/L | pH: 3,37

**NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION**  
 Alcohol: 15.9g/100ml | Sugar: 12g/100ml | Energetic value: 163kcal (689 kJ)/100ml | Suitable for Vegans: No | Suitable for Vegetarians: No | Gluten-Free

**RESPONSIBILITY, QUALITY AND INNOVATION**  
 An innovative family company, focused on making and developing high quality Portuguese wine brands globally, Sogrape Vinhos is an active member of "Wine in Moderation", and certified to the highest world standards for quality and food safety.



**Direct moments:**

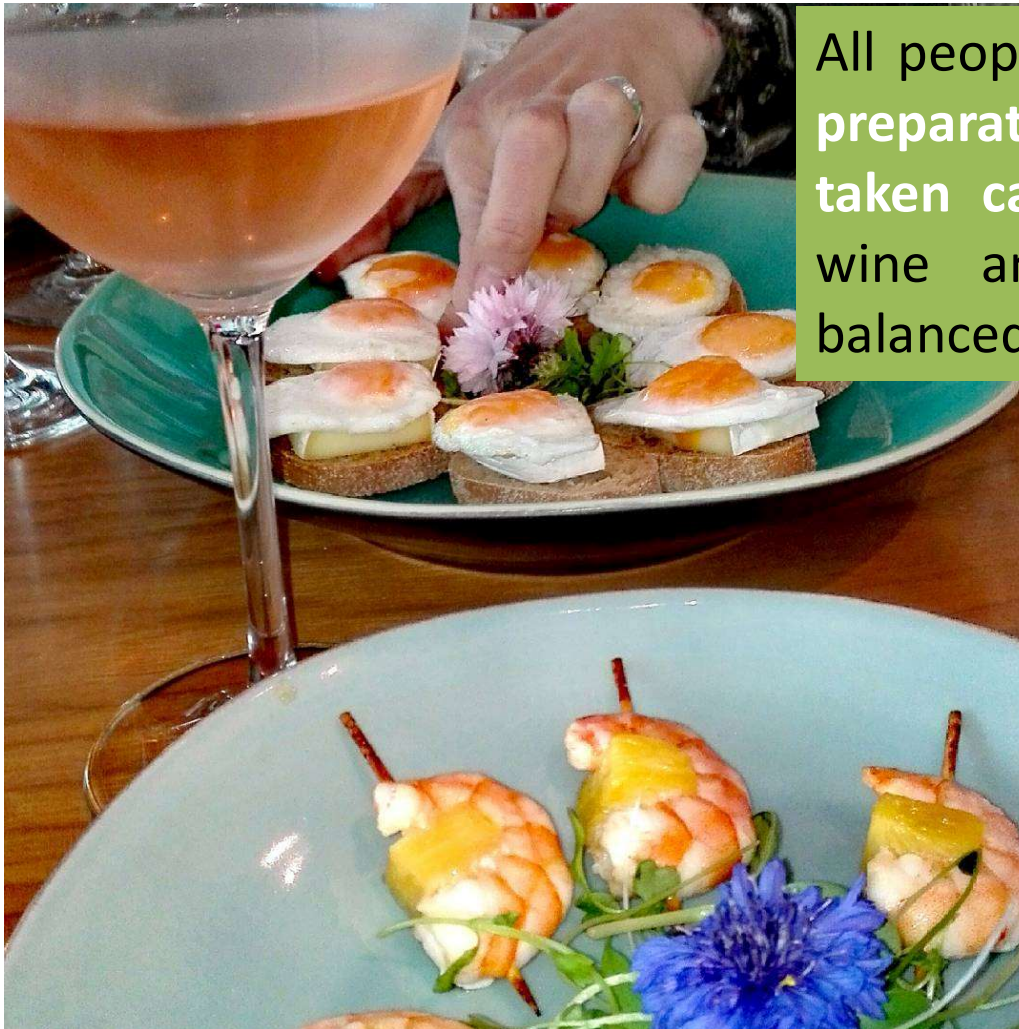


Preferably, **don't get together journalists with bloggers and other amateur audience.** That is, do not join professionals with amateurs, who are there for different reasons (Exception made if there are budget or other relevant reasons).

- **The first go there essentially to gather information.**
- **The seconds go mainly because they like wines.** They may be genuinely interested oenophiles, but like the rest of the public, they have their professions and their lives. Sometimes they post photos on facebook or instagram, for example, but only to trigger more invitations. Very few communicate effectively with the public.

**Direct moments:**

**Lunch and wine dinners, and similar, for journalists, bloggers and other influencers.**



All people is important. Then, the preparation of the meal should be taken care of, and the duets of wine and food should be as balanced as possible.

## Lunch and wine dinners, and similar, for bloggers and other influencers



I have participated in many fantastic lunches/dinners, in terms of **dishes and wines**, which were authentic disasters in the relation of flavors, aromas and textures between them, because **the relationship was only imagined, and not tasted.**

Of course the main motivation of a lot of the participants is to taste the wines, and they expect that the food is at least good. **But there can always be someone like me!**



**Direct moments:**

**Trade shows and other similar wine events**

In this type of fairs, all kinds of people arise, from the general public, to critics, winemakers, sommeliers and above all, **current and punctual business partners.**



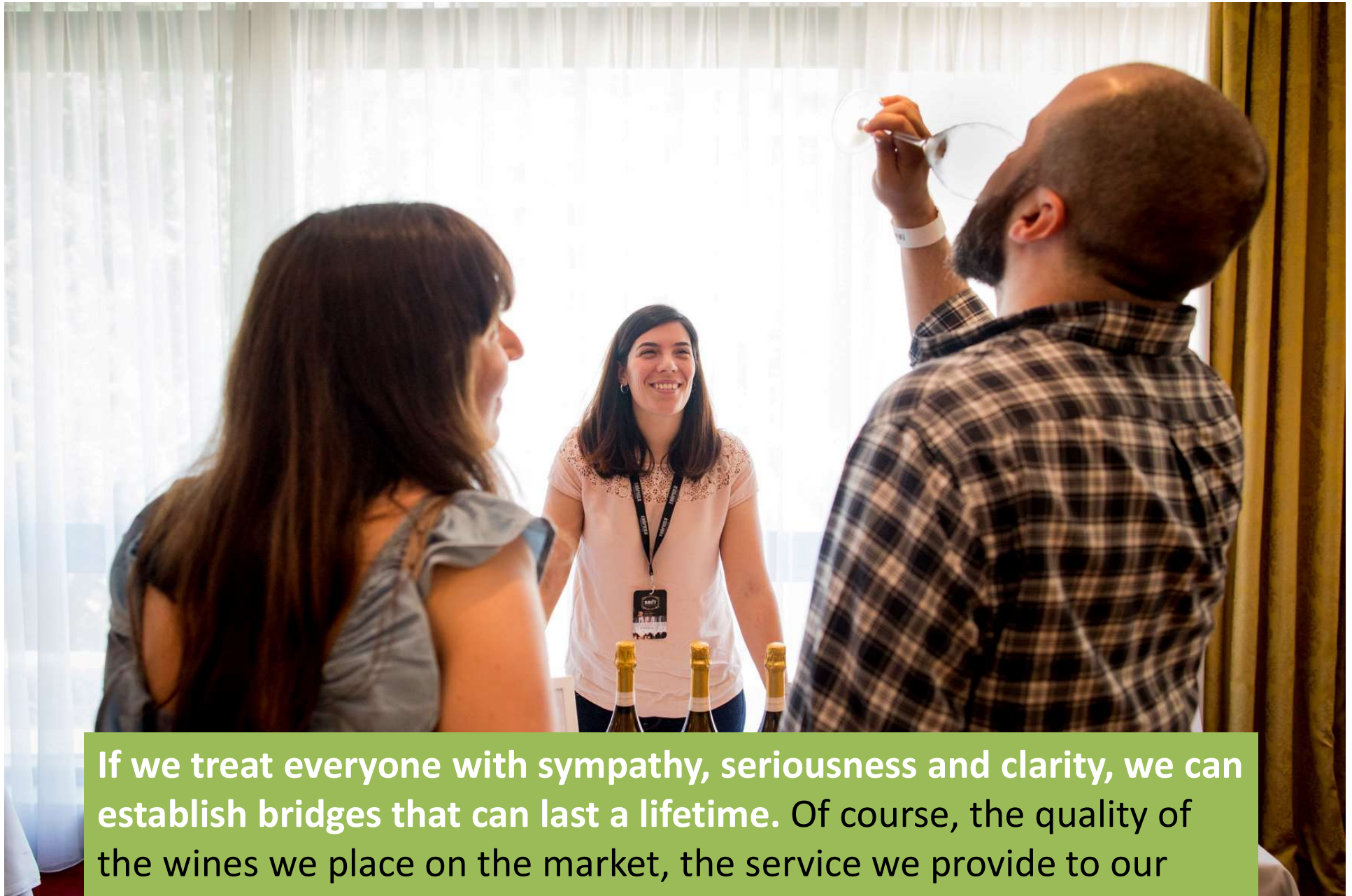


## There are no better people than others



In such events, the winemaker or any representative of a company should take into account, above all, that there are no people more important than others.

**The aspect doesn't count.** A woman or a man with earrings and tattoos can hide an entrepreneur, looking for different quality wines to market in her/his wine shop, or distribution company.



**If we treat everyone with sympathy, seriousness and clarity, we can establish bridges that can last a lifetime.** Of course, the quality of the wines we place on the market, the service we provide to our customers and the support we give them, are essential in the relationships between business partners.



# Principles of good direct communication

Winemakers must be prepared with all the relevant information about the wines presented, the harvest year and the company.

- In this type of event, be it a meeting with the press or other, **the majority of the public is really interested**, and have different degrees of knowledge about wines.
- **Also participating those who think that know everything** about the matter, and the people who just go there to eat and drink.

# For all this, beyond knowledge:



- **Winemakers** should be able to express themselves with **simplicity and clarity**,
- **Be friendly** (a smile opens many more doors than a closed face),
- Have the **power to withstand** (there are always people who become even more irreverent and inappropriate with the drink) and the **ability to change the course of the conversation** to soften the environment
- And **be firm in their knowledge and convictions**, and flexible in relation to what they do not know or know little

These principles can be the basis of all contacts with the public, when oenology professionals represent themselves, their company and their wines.

**Winemakers must be prepared!**

# Main virtues of an oenologist to communicate



Knowledge, humility, ability to listen to others, power to withstand, suppleness and good physical and oral expressiveness.



## Main virtues of an oenologist to communicate



**CONFIDENCE**

**HUMILITY**

Demonstration of presumption usually generates antagonisms. The demonstration of excess of humility generates skepticism.

The oenologist should show confidence in his professional and general knowledge. And must be humble to listen and learn from others. If so, people who are there essentially to listen to him, taste his wines and ask questions to learn.



**Main virtues of an oenologist to communicate**

**Ability to listen to others** – Interest demonstrations generates positive effects in the interaction with others.

**This interest has to be real, because people can always ask questions that the oenologist must answer.**

## Main virtues of an oenologist to communicate

**Suppleness** – Even though it is necessary to have high levels of knowledge about what you do, the company where you work and the production cycles, hardly anyone has the knowledge about everything.



**Sometimes**, as it is commonly said in football jargon, **it is necessary to know how to "kick to corner"**. It is an art that is learned with time, which implies **power to withstand and a great ability to stay calm and solve problems efficiently and quickly.**

The best way to respond, for example, to a difficult question, is to show humility, saying that you do not have all the data to answer, but you will study it, and then disclose the answer (You can make the contact directly).



## Main virtues of an oenologist to communicate

**Good physical expressiveness** - The physical involvement in what you are saying helps to involve others in the presentation. Therefore, it's preferable to do some theater, without excesses, of course.

**Good oral expression** - A bad diction does not let us pass, for those who are listening, the message we want. In addition, it generates the disinterest of the audience, as it happens when we can't project the voice.

# Establish and maintain relationships

To establish and maintain a network of contacts with other specialists, suppliers and clients is essential in any profession.

The most successful oenologists are those who are “real professionals” and also establish a network of contacts with journalists of the specialty, critics and sommeliers. So, whenever some of them ask you, **please provide your contact phone and e-mail**, and ask theirs.

**And do not forget to answer when they call! It can be important!**



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