

There are several reasons your mic could stop working. The good news is, there are only a few problems you can have with a ribbon mic, and one of these below is nearly 100% certain to be the problem. Internal wires rarely ever go bad, except where they're soldered, and I've never had a transformer go bad in more than 1000 mics. It's usually something simple and easy to fix, or it's a clamp/copper/oxidation issue where you need to change your ribbon and clean the copper. (See #3)



RIBBON MICROPHONES

Listed in the order of most probable causes:

1. A bad XLR cable (I have to ask!) This is the #1 "problem" reported to me, and the easiest to fix. Just confirm another mic works with that same cable.
2. A preamp issue (Again, I know you've probably checked it, but we need to rule it out.) volume/gain turned down, wrong patch, no return bus, etc.
You can check both #1 and #2 at the same time, by swapping mics. If that other mic works on the same mic/cable/pre setup, then you know it's a problem in your first mic.
3. A ribbon connection that has become oxidized with time. If the copper foil wasn't cleaned REALLY well before you laid the ribbon in the truss, that connection can oxidize over time creating an insulator of Copper Oxide under the Aluminum ribbon. Sometimes, simply tightening the clamps a tiny bit will break-through that oxide layer, and your mic will work for years or forever. Sometimes the oxide can return, and you'll need to replace the ribbon. Tighten your clamps and try it again.
4. A wire that is touching another wire at a soldered joint, or touching the inside of the mic body. (A short-circuit.) Check the red/black wires where you soldered them to the transformer, and wrap them in tape or shrink tubing to prevent unwanted contact.
5. A broken ribbon, or magnets that have come loose. Simply holding up the mic to a light should tell you if your ribbon is intact. The magnets can let go when mics are left in freezing cold or burning hot cars, or other storage extremes. The magnets heat and cool at a different rate than the truss, and a large or rapid change can compromise (crack) the adhesive securing the magnets to the truss.
6. A cold solder joint has finally gone bad. This can be any soldered joint in the circuit... copper foil, red/black wires, XLR connector, transformer leads, etc. Anywhere you soldered a connection, look for a dull, rough patch of solder, rather than a shiny, smooth fillet. Cold solder joints can work for a while, but fail months or years later. Search Google images of "cold solder joint" for visuals. Re-flow any suspicious solder joints.
7. The copper foil has ripped-off from the white ribbon truss. Once your mic is assembled, it is unlikely, but it could happen if the mic was assembled with some mechanical stress pulling/pushing the red/black wires, which has finally compromised the copper, and ripped it. If your copper is ripped, you'll need to re-install it.
8. Oxidized XLR pins. Look for blackened pins on your XLR connector. Often, simply shining them by plugging/unplugging into several different cables will improve the connection. Other times, you may need to clean them with a chemical, or scrub them with a tiny wire brush. (Take care not to get steel bristles into the magnet gap!)

If you take-apart your mic, please send me some photos, and I'll "see" if there's anything I can do to help.