

# The RightStaff Review

The right choice for your staffing needs



## Huh? The True Art of Listening

By Marsha Petri Sue

Great salespeople are great listeners – Period. Case closed. They have developed the ability to hear their customers and clients, understand their needs, and meet those needs with products and services. How great a listener are you? Answer most given: Not good enough.

*Here are four key points to help improve your listening skills:*



1. **Turn off your self-talk.** We cannot hear what the other person is saying if we have our own thoughts getting in the way. We talk to ourselves while others are talking to us. The rate of speech in our own heads is about 600 words per minute (WPM). Most people, customers included, only speak about 150 WPM. So slow down and focus on their words.
2. **Hear what the other person is saying.** Often we allow our filters to interpret what the other person said. A filter is anything that becomes a barrier to hearing what the other person is saying.

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## Start Out On The Right Foot With New Hires

Companies spend a lot of money recruiting and hiring new employees, only to forget about them when they start.

*Here is how to start off correctly with your new hires:*

- ◆ **Inform everyone** of when the new hire will start working, and ask him or her to make a special effort to make that person feel as though they made the right decision coming to work here. Make them feel a part of the team.
- ◆ **Introduce the new hire** to each employee with pride and excitement during your group meeting.
- ◆ **Create a buddy program.** Pair the new hire with an employee who has a great attitude and respect for the company. Have the employee be their mentor for the next couple of months and to observe how the new hire is coming along. The buddy should meet with the new hire weekly to find out if they have any questions about the job, or need help with their job, or to find out if it is what the new hire was expecting.
- ◆ **Throw a welcome party.** During the new hires first week have a little get together with coffee and doughnuts. This can make a lasting impression. Don't throw a party for employees that are leaving.

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***"Your success in life will be in direct proportion to what you do after you do what you are expected to do."***



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## How's Morale?

Listening to the pronouns employees use when they describe your organization can speak volumes about their commitment and morale. *Examples:*

**"They" and "them."** If you hear mostly these two, you probably have some morale boosting to do.

**"We" and "us."** These are the words you want to hear. They mean employees are proud to be part of the organization.

Source: *CARE Packages for the Workplace*, by Barbara A. Glanz, McGraw-Hill, 11 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011.

## Where Is Your Comfort Zone?

Does the following cartoon speak to you?



### The Choice Question –

Are you making choices because they are in your comfort zone or are you making choices to take you where you need and desire to go?

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When thinking ahead for your response – bias, background, culture, education, socioeconomics, and such, act as filters. The salesperson must eliminate filters to hear the message of the customer.

3. **Physically let the person know you are listening.** Eighty percent of our message is delivered in how we appear to the other person. A positive nod of the head, a verbal "Uh-huh" or "OK" are clues that you are still with them. Open body language is critical. Folding our arms in front of our body is a closed position that signals to others we are mentally turned off to their words. Solution? Keep your hands at your sides (in the listening position).
4. **Paraphrase using 'I' language.** To make sure you hear what the other person said, repeat key words to verify what they said. For example, say: "So, if I understand you correctly ... People don't always say what they mean. Successful salespeople paraphrase the important parts of what they heard.

### Secret to improving your listening skills:

Place a tape recorder in the top drawer of your desk and record *your side* of the next eight telephone conversations. Find a quiet corner and listen to what you said. Identify one element you dislike and focus on changing it. Then put a rubber band on your wrist as a reminder of the habit you want to change and be patient. Most habits take an average of 30 days (of constant practice) to change.

### Great listeners become great salespeople. How great are you?

Source: *Marsha Petri Sue P.O. Box 15218, Scottsdale, AZ 85267.*

## Motivating Employees

When you ask for your employees to put in extra hours, make sure you are willing to do the same. But, be careful. You will make the biggest impact if you come in early rather than staying late.



Why? Staying late can convey the impression that you are unorganized and can't complete your work on time. But, coming in early clearly shows that you can't wait to get started on the day's work.

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