

"If you want a better answer, ask a better question!"

Masterful listening is the one of the leadership/management traits that is a genuine game changer – It truly is the silver bullet! Like a great tennis match where you volley, then they volley back, the longer this goes on, the richer the tennis. What's good for tennis is also good for conversation.

Listen 80%

I challenge you to set a goal for yourself to actively listen (with the tools below) to one other person each day for seven days. Then measure your return on investment (R.O.I.). **REMEMBER** not to "pepper" control people with questions, that is just as unproductive as asking no questions at all.

METHODOLOGY / ACTIVE LISTENING

Use the (**JUST A.S.K. CARD**)
or the backside of this sheet.

LEVEL I: Passive listening focuses on what it means to **US**.

LEVEL II: Active listening focuses on what 's being said and what it means to the **OTHER** person.

LEVEL III: Expands level II to include body language, emotions, tone of voice and environment.

ADVANCED QUESTIONS / ACTIVE LISTENING

Below is a recap of 5 powerful questions for conversation.

- 1.** Ask, **"What's top of mind for you right now?"** Then *LISTEN* fully. If you can't do this, you may need medication!
Persevere - develop this weak muscle. You can do this!
- 2.** Ask, **"What are you clear on right now?"**
- 3.** **"What are your expectations for this meeting? For this event? For the next hour?"** Etc. Remember to listen fully...
- 4.** **"If I could only do one thing to help you right now what would it be?"**
- 5.** **"What is your greatest personal challenge right now (professionally or personally)?"** Or, **"What's causing you the most tension right now?"**

Conversation suggestions...

The power is in the question: for example, the question "what do you think your next step is with _____?" (from the top of mind question above or any other question you used) is in a sense, sticking the landing, then make sure to follow-up tomorrow or next week with, "Hey how is that _____ going? Is there anything I can do to help? See the leadership MATRIX for a tracking system. This is inspecting what's expected. Also, praise them when they hit the bull's eye, because "What's rewarded is repeated!"

BONUS / ACTIVE LISTENING

Create your own list of powerful questions.

Make sure they are open ended (tell me about the sales call), not close ended (did you get the sale?).

Never ask a question that can be answered with a yes or a no answer. It does not create dialogue or conversation as well as open-ended questions do.

JUST ASK CARD - Powerful Questions

LEVEL I: ASK a powerful question

LEVEL II: SHUT-UP and listen-up

LEVEL III: KEEP ASKING questions (versus talking)

Power Questions:

1. "Tell me about _____?" (This develops dialogue)
2. "Tell me more about _____?" (This deepens dialogue)
3. "What do you want?" (This reveals their priorities)

WEEKLY CHECKLIST

DAY	DATE	DAILY CHECK IN	X	✓
1	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	___/___/___	ACTIVELY LISTENED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

" YOU CAN GET EVERYTHING
IN LIFE YOU WANT IF YOU
HELP ENOUGH OTHER PEOPLE
GET WHAT THEY WANT. "

- Zig Ziglar

" THE FIRST AND MOST
NECESSARY SKILL OF A
LEADER IS TO MASTER THE
ART OF LISTENING. "

- Peter Drucker

" I'VE NEVER LEARNED
ANYTHING WITH MY
MOUTH OPEN. "

- Larry King

Listening "pro-tip"

Asking 'WHAT' questions creates dialogue better than who, where when and how questions.

Who, where, when and how questions create more defensiveness than "what" questions.