

It's All About Communication

by Dr. Todd Frobish



How often do you find yourself having to repeat yourself in a given day? Does it frustrate you when your friends, parents, and even teachers don't seem to understand you? How angry does it make you when others take what you just said out of context? If you ask, most people say that they are great listeners. I usually just laugh when someone makes that claim. Most people are terrible listeners.

Here are some basic and random facts about listening.

Spoken words account for only a third of our interpretation; the rest comes from nonverbal behaviors

perceived by visual and auditory listening.

The average person speaks at a rate of 125 words per minute, and yet the average listener only pays attention to about 100 words per minute. This means that one-fifth of everything that is said to us is lost because we have simply failed to pay attention. Human beings have the listening potential of up to 450 words per minute if trained properly.

On average, even knowing they were being tested, research participants only remembered 25% of a spoken message immediately after listening to it.

Good listeners are perceived more attractive than they really are! So, you can save yourself a few bucks at the gym by listening up.

Elementary students are reported as having better listening skills than any other age group, even though high school students believe themselves to be the best listeners. They're invincible, remember?

Business leaders rank listening skills as one of the top skills they look for in new employees and one of the top factors in promoting them.

And, finally, physicians interrupt 69% of patients within 18 seconds of the patient interview. Consequently, in 77% of the interviews, the patient's real reason for the appointment is never resolved.

Why are we so lost when it comes to listening? We've been doing it since we were newborns--probably before (I don't personally remember!). In fact, it is the very first learned communication behavior. So why are we so bad at it? For one, although listening is the most employed communication behavior, it is the activity that receives the least attention in school. We focus so much of our energies in K-12 and in Higher Ed on reading, writing, and a little bit on public speaking, but nothing on listening. As a society, too, we are overly-mediated and obnoxiously loud.

When was the last time you were alone with no noise? I mean NO noise. Turn off your radio, ipod, cell phone, TV, Internet music, and get away from all other people? If you ever have, which I doubt, I'm sure you found it oddly strange. It probably wasn't long before you found yourself looking for some sort of mediated distraction. That's called withdraw, people! You've been drugging yourself for years, maybe your entire lifetime, with noise, and you didn't even know it. Try driving without your car radio on. I dare you! These distractions have killed our listening abilities. We simply can't pay attention to any one source for long without looking for new stimulation.

So what do we do? Well, turn off the noise, practice minimizing and ignoring distractions, and make a commitment to one person at a time. Listen not just with your ears, but with your eyes too. It will help you put what they say into the proper context. And remember that listening and hearing are NOT the same thing. Hearing will happen whether you want it to or not. It's like your heart beating. You can't avoid it. But hearing has nothing to do with memory. Listening does. It will take your full effort. Listening is about focusing on the right things and really working to remember, interpret, and react appropriately. Can you handle that?

If you improve your listening skills, you will find yourself more liked, more sought after, more marketable, more knowledgeable, more open-minded, more supportive, and more capable as a communicator than ever before. It really is the secret to success. It's all about communication, folks.

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Athletes Honored during FSU Athletic Banquet

by Angel Robinson

The 2010 athletic banquet was held Wednesday April 21st.

The theme of the Banquet was "Toughness, Integrity and Passion". With two teams, women's basketball and football, winning CIAA championships--all the teams look forward to taking the championship this upcoming year.

The winners include:

Female comeback of the year-Demarius Pankey

Male Comeback of the Year Jeffery Brooks

Men Basketball

Jarmel Baxter is a sophomore from Charlotte. Baxter is a shooting-guard on the Men's Basketball team

How do you feel about this year's season?

"Didn't turn out the way they wanted to. It was a new program and a new system. Most of the team members were new. For us it was a Rebuilding year. We took the positives out of it right now. We are getting stronger and getting better on the basketball court. We are going to play smart this upcoming year. We have a couple of guys coming in this year, most of the same guys from last year, so the same chemistry will be here. And we plan on winning CIAA 2011.

Women's Basketball

Danielle Russell is a senior from Wilmington who plays point guard for the Lady Broncos.

How do you feel about this year season? I felt pretty good about the team this year, we got a new coach this year and that was a big transition. I'm about to graduate and I got a ring. I wish the team the best of luck in the future!

Tennis

Jensine Mcmillan is a sophomore originally from New York now living in Charlotte. Mcmillan's ranking is six for the Lady Tennis team.

How do you feel about this year season? This was my first year playing on the team. I was interested in Tennis and I found it to be very fun. It was a learning experience learning how to play on a team and get along with my teammates. The future of the team is looking good. We have a great coach, Arie Bennett.

Volleyball

Ifeyinwa Nwokolo is a freshman from Greensboro who plays middle blocker on the Volleyball team.

How do you feel about this year season? It was a good experience for me this year. Hopefully we can win the CIAA this upcoming season and win and grow together.