



LISTEN ! I HEAR A GIFT

If you have read anything I have written or heard me at a Seminar or workshop, you know the importance I give to the art of listening. And it is an art.

I consider listening the most powerful attribute in your fundraising tool chest. Best of all, it's a talent that can be learned and acquired.

Here are some observations I have on the subject. I'd also like to hear from you. You likely have some of your own observations.

1. It often shows an extraordinary command of the language to say nothing.
2. There is no greater compliment than demonstrating interest in the person you are talking with.
3. Thoreau wrote in his journal: "I've had the most wonderful day of my life. Someone listened to me."
4. We are blessed with two ears and one mouth. It is a constant reminder that we should listen twice as much as we talk. (Actually, I suggest that we listen 75% of the time and talk 25% of the time.)
5. Keeping quiet at precisely the right moments is an important ingredient for an open communication and the flowing of important information from the person you are with.
6. Ask questions. This is not for the sake of having something to say— but for the desire to gain information and better understanding. It is important to note that some people listen to respond. You should listen to gain important information. There's an important distinction.
7. What should you listen for? The little things. Everything.
8. Prepare for the meaning. Unless you know what you're listening for, it may be difficult to know it when you hear it.
9. Listen to context. Listen for content. If you do this, you will be listening effectively.



10. The better you listen, the smarter you get.
11. What you don't hear from the person may be what you don't know. And that could hurt you. Probe.
12. The better you listen, the more you realize how little you know.
13. What you have learned will only help.
14. Most of us know it is important to probe and keep silent. But few know how to do this and win.
15. When you talk too much, it is just as hard to remember all that you said as it is to remember what they said.
16. If you do all the talking, you're in the spotlight— not the person you're talking with.
17. If you don't ask the right questions, you'll never get the right answers.
18. If you do all the talking, it's your agenda— not the person you're talking with.
19. Open questions allow the person you're with an opportunity to "tell it like it is." I have found that they often will tell you far more than they ever anticipated.
20. If you do all the talking, you will not uncover giving clues. If you do all the talking, you do not empower the other person.

- Jerold Panas