



## Tip Sheet by De Backman-Hoyle

### The I'm Not Listening Manager

*“I have managers that think they really listen to their staff but when you ask their staff do they feel listened too they say no.”*

How do I help these managers see their reality is different from their staff experience?



Cited management writer Kris Cole suggests that most managers spend 75%-90% of their time in one of four communication modes. These four modes are writing, reading, speaking and listening. The listening component will vary depending on the individual manager and the tasks and activities involved.

I have worked with so many managers that have a distorted positive view of how well they listen to their staff, a classic 'JoHari Window' blind spot. Managers are just like the rest of us they often prefer to hear positive news rather than negative news and often staff will hold off telling a manager the bad news until the absolutely have to.

Professor Henry Mintzberg conducted a study where he ascertained that 93% of verbal contacts are impromptu meaning that very often the manager and the staff member are thinking on their feet. This means there is little time to think in advance and consider the best quality questions to gather accurate information.

Listening requires you to use your heart, your mind and then your ears and eyes to listen to what another person wants you to understand. (Cole)



The art of good listening can be reviewed by a listener by considering these four questions:

1. Have I thought about what the other person is trying to say or not say?
2. Have I put myself in the position of that persons situation, do I sense how they may be feeling?
3. Did I stop long enough to see the unspoken clues in the message?
4. Did I listen to the words and as importantly the choice of words and the feelings connected to the words?

Now that you understand these components the way to educate your manager would be to provide your message in a way that makes your manager stop and listen, think about and be clear on what is the impact of your manager knowing this information - make sure you are explicit don't leave it to chance that they will pick up the 'vibe'.

Ask your manager to coach you on these skills and in the process they may pick up a few extra skills of their own. Be brave and let your manager know what it is that needs to happen for you to be truly listened to.

*This tip sheet is part of the skills training that is covered in the Making Managers Matter programs.*

*For more information on these programs contact us on:*

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