

The Leadership Principle of **LISTENING**



A wise man will hear and increase learning.

PRINCIPLE OF THE WEEK

To listen means to make an effort to hear or pay attention, to give heed or to take advice. The proverb says a wise man will hear. This is saying that if we are wise, we will be good listeners. The reason wise people listen is because they know they learn more by listening. Wisdom is not an inherited gift; rather it is acquired through paying attention when listening and learning by observing and taking the time to understand. It is the awareness of the message behind the words, and the seeking of insight beyond what we are hearing and seeing. There is a superficial comprehension of things that the majority comes to, but there is more that only comes to those who make the effort to listen and observe. This is a discipline which also includes what we say and how much we say.

Good listeners are seekers of truth. They are thinkers and love quiet time to review what is inside them. They ask many questions in order to understand and be understood. Sometimes we think that people around us hear what we are saying, only to find out later that they thought we meant something else, even thinking it is about them when we did not even have that in our mind.

Listening is not enough, we must hear. Listening is not hearing until we fully understand what the other party is trying to convey in addition to the words they are speaking. We measure and judge the words of others by our own perceptions and our emotional state at the time we hear. We hear the words, then form our own opinion based on what we think we heard, and interpret it with feelings from our past experiences. Everything we hear goes through a process based on our hurts and disappointments, or successes and

accomplishments, we then judge accordingly; that's what we call reading into it. When someone is speaking about any topic we immediately respond in our minds, often defending our position instead of listening. While the person is still speaking we are thinking and preparing how we want to answer. Many times we don't even hear what they are saying because we are so preoccupied with stating our opinion or our side of the story. This way of communicating does not give us greater understanding or make us wiser.

If we are going to be successful in building business and personal relationships, we will need to take the initiative to listen until we know what people are really saying and what they need. We will discover how to better help people as well by being patient and listening attentively before responding, paying attention to the message behind their words and watching their body language. This is the first step to helping others, if we listen we will learn their needs.

Benefits

1. We become wiser.
2. We avoid confusion and hurting others.
3. We will be known as a good listener and earn the right to be listened to in return.
4. We are able to focus on the message without judging or comparing, and are able to respond in a helpful way.
5. We discover the needs of others.

Action Plan for

LISTENING



Steps to Follow

1. Learn to concentrate; make an effort to comprehend what is being communicated. Hear the thoughts, feelings and concepts that are being transmitted.
2. Ask questions to make sure you understand. This brings clarity and avoids jumping to wrong conclusions. Take your time before responding.
3. Dedicate time to listening; it is a duty not an option because listening is the best form of learning. We cannot learn without listening. As people of character we must dedicate time to listening and observing.
4. Get involved in discussions; this is a great place to practice listening. We give and receive. Sometimes we have to hold back and pay even more attention, it facilitates our listening skills.
5. Seek the truth. Desire to know what the truth is, not who has a reason. This will solve a lot of problems.
6. Ask questions. A good way to make sure we understand someone is to repeat what they said and ask if that is what they meant. Ask for clarity, it is time well spent and will avoid a lot of hurts and confusion.

We become wise by listening, and we keep on listening because we see the value in it. Become a lifelong learner, never be satisfied with what you

know, you can always learn something new, either from a book, a person or a situation. Always increase in learning and understanding, our life and future depend on it.

Remember... Thoughts become actions. Actions become habits. Habits become our destiny.

Reflect and respond

What type of people do you have difficulty hearing?

How has it affected you when someone has really listened to you?

Are you misunderstood a lot?

Evaluate yourself from 1 to 10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
What specific action can you put into practice to test the benefits of this principle?										
Check list for the daily reading of this principle	M	T	W	T	F	S	S			

Completed

Not completed