



IMPROVING YOUR REPUTATION

NO, YOU CAN TALK TO HER, SHE REALLY LISTENS

Supervisors! When working with someone with something to say, sometimes we do not follow good habits of listening to make the other feel as though they are heard. The result? The talker:

- a) repeats the story ad nauseum
- b) gets 'stuck' in the feeling or problem
- c) leaves with the same feeling or problem they came in with

This defeats the purpose of going to someone to vent. Will they come back? Not likely, they will stuff it — the result of stuffing? *Resentment and negativity.* Of course then we can all complain how so many workers are negative.

Follow these beginning listening how-to and eventually these purposeful actions will actually help you 'really' listen someday.

1. Put your work away, get out from behind a desk, ignore the phone, do not look away, ask people to not interrupt — go through the motions of giving the person the impression that what they have to say is of some importance to you.

2. Bite your tongue. Listen, really listening means that you do not talk. When your mouth opens, your ears shut. Stop the bad habit of interrupting no matter how much you want to, have something valuable to say, need to say — whatever. Wait until that person stops talking — totally. Or when that person asks you question they actually want answered — then talk.

3. Smile or look pleasant and lean forward. Try it, it's magic, look into someone's face.

4. Ask a question, even if you don't have one. But make sure it's relevant or hasn't been answered.

5. Say nothing until you do this, "So what I hear you saying is....." Repeat everything you heard almost like a grocery list. I did this recently to five people I interviewed and they were so grateful at being heard there was actual surprise on their faces.

BEING A BETTER SUPERVISOR

...when you expect a lot from them - Overtime

Be the one to bring it up. Recognize that OT is hard and make sure your people know that you recognize how hard they're working. Acknowledge their sacrifices and losses. It isn't true that is you don't mention it they won't thinking about it. To be sure,

they're thinking about it — they just internalize — causing stress and burn out. Sharing emotions is like exposing mold to sunlight — dries them up.


Make sure they know why. Workers are much more likely to do something if they know why. Explain the full picture and then ask the favor or place the burden of mandatory OT. This helps to gain a buy in or at least give them some sense of being an adult.

Give them extras. Ask if there is anything they need, anything you can do to make this easier. Maybe not, but you've asked. If you don't have the ability to give them what they feel would help them out — at least tell them you will recommend that to the right authority. Be an advocate.

Help if you can. Ask – anything that you can do – extra break – go get food – offer a treat – share a book – to let them know you want them to feel rewarded for this additional burden.

Don't make promises you can't keep. Offering time off later, or comp time or other incentives that aren't solid can be damaging. People would rather have the cold hard truth than be disappointed and lose faith.

Supervisors Recommended Reading
"Leadership by Encouragement"
 Don Dinkmeyer, Ph. D,
 St. Lucie Press



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