

# CHALLENGE

A Herff Jones Impact Resource For Students

December, 2003

## DECEMBER CHALLENGE: Do You Hear What I Hear?

### Listening Skills

This exercise shows the dangers of rumors and secrets and how they change as they are repeated. Remember to always listen carefully and be sure that something is true before you repeat it. Be sure that you understand the facts. Have the group sit in a circle. One player in the group starts by whispering a phrase, just once, into the ear of a person sitting next to him. That person whispers in the next person's ear, just once, and so on around the circle until it travels back to the starter's ear. The starter tells the group what was heard and what was really said.

Here are some ideas to get started:

1. Three tinkering tailors were terribly tired.
2. Samuel Short's sister, Suzie, sat sewing silently.
3. The banana bread breeze blew by the brother's bakery.
4. Two toads tried to hop across the wide road in search of a home.
5. Twenty tall Turks twirled their white tasseled turbans.

6. Six grown men raced across the river in their hiking boots.
7. Back in Boston the bakers of bread decided to put off baking.
8. Downtown Cleveland calls for cooler windy winter weather weekend.
9. Batman bought a basket of biscuits at the Gotham City bake sale.
10. What would happen if Wendy went to Washington on Wednesday?

Be creative and write some of your own sentences as well as a short story.

Some processing questions include:

- ◆ Was the message the same as when it started?
- ◆ What do you think changed the message?
- ◆ What is a rumor?
- ◆ Are rumors always positive or always negative?
- ◆ Have you ever started a rumor?
- ◆ Have you ever been mentioned in a rumor that was not true? If so, how did it make you feel?
- ◆ Were you able to correct it?
- ◆ What is the best thing to do when you hear a rumor about someone?

### A Personal Action Plan For Becoming A Better Listener

The following is a guide to help you clarify your goals for becoming a better listener and outline the actions needed to achieve those goals.

1. My current listening skills are effective in the following areas:
2. I need to improve my listening skills in the following areas:
3. I will implement an action plan for listening improvement in the following manner:
  - A. My listening goals:
  - B. My plan for reaching my goals:
  - C. My timetable:
4. The following person(s) will benefit from my improved listening skills:
5. They will benefit in the following ways:



*This newsletter is a joint effort of Jackie Burch and Herff Jones, Inc.*



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## Listening Is A Gift, Give Generously

Listening is a skill that anyone can learn, and it is also a gift that anyone can give. It is a gift of a person's time and attention. Listening is an acknowledgment of caring. Honest listening encourages a speaker to be creative and feel more accepted.

According to author Tom Peters in his book, "In Search of Excellence," top executives have learned to be excellent listeners. They understand the importance of good listening. The best leaders do much more than just allow listening to happen. They realize that listening improves effectiveness, accomplishes more, and makes them a better leader. The gift of listening assumes that the speaker has value, dignity, and something to offer.



Listening is an everyday event. When listening, take the focus off of you "the listener" and encourage the speaker to express his/her ideas. By doing this you are extending the gift of listening. Leaders should have a

listening attitude. The results are worth it.

Consider making a gift certificate that says:

### **A Gift Of Listening**

**This certificate entitles you to one half hour of my undivided attention. I will listen to you carefully and thoughtfully and I'll only ask questions for clarification. When would you like your gift?**

**~Listener**

Think how happy a parent, teacher, friend, etc would be to receive this certificate.

## Special People Project

This project can be done at various times during the year such as Valentine's Day or Easter, but is especially great during the Christmas holiday season. During this season many elderly or shut-in people no longer have family or friends who can visit them or send them cards and letters. Get a list of those special people who would enjoy receiving cards and letters during the holidays. Work with nursing homes, churches, etc. to find special people to include. Then send those special people cards and letters during the holiday season. If possible, a visit to a nursing home would also be a nice holiday surprise. When visiting a nursing home, small gifts such as lotions, slippers, etc are always appreciated. But most important is having someone there for a visit.

## Make Your Team Goal And Objectives S M A R T

**SPECIFIC:** The outcome or end result is very clear to everyone

**MEASURABLE:** Be able to tell when the goal/objective is achieved

**ATTAINABLE:** While achieving the outcome may be a challenge, it is possible with the current resources

**RELEVANT:** The goal/objective is in line with the direction that the group should be moving

**TIMELY:** All goals/objectives can be achieved within a particular time period such as a specific date

Be sure that all goals/objectives are **SMART**.



From Your Friends  
at  
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