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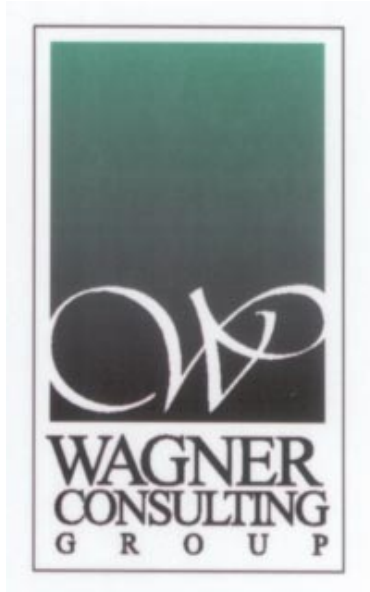
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Focus

A Newsletter published for clients and friends of Wagner Consulting Group

APR 2002

The Art of Listening

Listening earns you the right to comment.

Think about that, and the obvious converse situation: Not listening can make your ideas, opinions or suggestions irrelevant to the person with whom you are speaking.

Being "listened to" fulfils basic human needs for respect and empathy. It also forms the foundation for involvement with others.

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Good listeners

- Reserve judgment until they have heard the whole story
- Push away preconceived notions about the subject
- Listen to the *sequence* of the story

Listening to the sequence, without interruptions that throw the story off track, allows the speaker to identify all the issues. Sequence clarifies context, and frames key issues. It also helps the listener avoid imposing their own structure and making false assumptions.

Good listeners are not passive. They briefly respond with *appropriate* empathy at key points to let the speaker know they have heard and understood.

Six attributes of good listening are:

1. Probe for clarification
2. Listen for unvoiced emotions
3. Listen for the story
4. Summarize key points they have heard
5. Empathize
6. Listen for what is different - not what is familiar

Effective listening is good business. Good listeners are more popular with friends and associates, better at selling their products or ideas, and stronger leaders.

Tom Wagner

We help clarify options so our clients
identify the Right Questions
and solve the Right Problems.

Call us at 800 422-1374 to learn more.

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