

LEADERSHIP TR@CKS

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Why Should Anyone Listen to YOU?

Dr. Jim Dyke

For clear and open communication in the workplace, managers and supervisors must take the lead to provide a practical model in their own behavior, and cultivate an environment that promotes open and honest interaction among their team members.

Walk the Talk

Do you want your people to be good listeners? Then show them what it looks like by demonstrating it in your own behavior. How? Use the following steps, in order, and you'll show them how:

Focus, Focus, Focus—by paying close attention when people are talking to you, looking them directly in the eye.

Provide non-verbal listening "cues"—like nodding your head and giving verbal affirmations like "uh huh" or "I see."

Don't interrupt—and don't correct them or defend your position until they have finished speaking!

Confirm your comprehension with simple feedback—by requesting confirmation: "Let me see if I understand you correctly. You said... Do I have that right?"

Plow the Field

Cultivate the "soil" for good communication, creating an environment that encourages open, honest, and direct communication.

Here are some other simple but effective things you can do:

Establish an open door policy so your team can have access to you; but don't stop there...

Take the initiative by getting out of your office to "chat" with team members on their own turf and deliver information to them *personally*, not just through emails or memos.

Create a positive atmosphere for communication by giving your team members plenty of affirmation, praise, thanks and applause. Talking about *problems* all the time doesn't encourage communication, it shuts it down.

Cultivate the Grapevine

Informal communication networks always exist, so take the initiative to feed them with the right information! Try these ideas:

Set aside time for individual appointments or lunches with your team members. Ask for their input and listen to their ideas and opinions. And answer their questions. If they offer a negative of some kind, ask them how it can be changed for the better.

Be honest about what's going on. Even saying "I don't know yet" is a good answer, *if it's honest!*

Plan for frequent meetings with your whole team, but keep them short and informative. Encourage questions and provide straightforward answers.

There's much more to good communication in the workplace, but these basic helps will give you and your team a great start.

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For more helpful details and practical tips, download the companion issue of *The Personal Trainer*.



Leadership Tracks is a resource for growing leaders edited by Dr. Jim Dyke, the Founder and Director of **Corporate Leadership Initiatives, Inc.**—an organization dedicated to equipping men and women with skills and principles pertinent to the role and life of a transformational leader of the 21st century. For more information, you can log on to the website at:

www.CLionline.com and connect with additional practical and creative resources that will help you and your team apply the ideas and principles presented in this newsletter. Copyright 2020—James R. Dyke—all rights reserved.