



## Power Choice #6— LISTENING

Do you know that research show that 85% of what we have know that we have learned by **listening**?

Do you know that statistically we **listen** at 125-250 words per minute, but we think at 1000-3000 words per minute?

Do you believe that **listening** is one of the top skills required to be a successful business leader?

### If **YOU** did (and even if you did not)...

Please read on!

- Learn techniques to that can help **YOU** build stronger **listening** skills and capabilities!
- Learn the habits and behaviors that get in the way of your ability to be viewed as an extraordinary **listener**!
- Learn to identify those **listening** competencies where you excel and take them to the next level!

We are interested in helping **YOU** build **YOUR** ability to enhance your capacity to have and use your **listening** talents more consistently to improve **YOUR** life. If **YOU** desire to have extraordinary **listening** abilities that help you to live a life filled with purpose, balanced health, social responsiveness, enhanced ethical behaviors, mental growth, nurturing family relationships, amazing career performance and financial success, than contact Laura or Leanne to begin **YOUR** first steps in learning to rely on **YOUR listening skills** to help you achieve **YOUR** greatest dreams.

We invite you to our websites (see below) to subscribe to **Power Choices©** and we hope that you choose to discover how choosing to develop **YOUR listening talents** can change **YOUR** life.

**The Four Agreements**  
by  
**Don Miguel Ruis**



***"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. When we really listen to people there is an alternating current, and this recharges us so that we never get tired of each other. We are constantly being re-created."***  
Anonymous

Laura R. Novakowski,  
**Positive Power Strategies, Inc.**  
**Inspiring People to Discover Their Health & Wealth**  
570.477.3388 or  
<http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

Leanne Hoagland-Smith,  
**ADVANCED SYSTEMS**  
**Connecting Passion & Purpose to Double Performance**  
219.759.5601 or  
<http://www.processspecialist.com/>

According to various studies on communication, we spend 70 to 80 percent of our waking hours in some form of communication. Of that time, we spend about 9 percent writing, 16 percent reading, 30 percent speaking, and **45 percent listening**. Those same studies also confirm that most of us are ineffective listeners. To increase our effectiveness in **listening**, I'd like to offer an adaptation of **The Four Agreements** a wonderful book by Dr. Don Miguel Ruis.

First Agreement... **Listen** with "Integrity."

In my experience, listening takes more than to stop talking. Listening takes active, responsible attention and full engagement. We do others and ourselves a great disservice when multi-task when talking on the phone and talking with a colleague. I can tell when someone is responding to emails or opening mail while I am having a conversation with them. Sad to say, I have been out of integrity myself and this has cost me. Cost me in dollars, information and even relationships. Now, I work very hard to **listen** with integrity, to be fully aware and present with the person. The quality of my conversations, as I **listen** with "integrity," has improved dramatically.

Second Agreement... *Don't "Personalize" when listening.*

People often times make states that start with "You did..." or "You didn't..." and if we personalize that when we are listening, we quickly move into a defensive "I did not..." or "I did..." When a person starts a comment with "You...", it's how they are relating with what they see and therefore they often times are using the word "you" as a collective you. For example, I worked with a great person a few years ago that in every meeting when I would critique performance of the team, she would immediately jump in and say, "I did ..." or "I failed to do..." Never once was the critiquing directed towards her personally, but she always offered an excuse or defense for the outcome. As a team with a lot of humor, we eventually helped her overcome personalizing when she listened.

Third Agreement... *"Don't Make Assumptions" when listening.*

Learn to ask. A friend of mine has a great philosophy – he said for him to get over the "stories" that he made up in his mind about what people were **really** saying. He realized that he spent most of his "**listening**" time making up stories about what people really meant. When he no longer made assumptions and he asked for clarification, his personal and professional life improved dramatically.

Fourth Agreement... *Always listen with "your best"*

This agreement wraps the other 3 agreements together beautifully. To listen with our best, we have the opportunity and the obligation to keep our integrity in front of us, rather just give integrity lip service. When I appreciate the other person's point-of-view, rather than jumping in and personalizing every work, comment or statement, listening becomes so much richer. To ask rather than assume that we know what the other person is trying convey is some much healthier and more respectful of ourselves and them.

As we adopt "*The Four Agreements*" to **listen** with integrity, stop personalizing, eliminate making assumptions and continually work on being on best, we can take our lives and careers to an entirely different and more meaningful level. That's mastery!



## ***Listen By Seeing and With Purpose***

*Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.*

***“You cannot truly **listen** to anyone and  
do anything else at the same time.”***

M. Scott Peck

**Listening** is usually associated with the sense of hearing. However, in our professional and personal lives, we **listen** more by seeing than by hearing. Just think back to a recent conversation and can you remember what was said? Did that mental flashback include the person’s dress, their hand gestures and their emotional state? For many, the answer to this question is a resounding “Yes.”

In the late 1960’s, Dr. Mehrabian and his colleague, Ferris, researched the effects of communication through the interaction of speech, facial expressions and tone. Their efforts resulted in the communication rule where 55% of communication is non-verbal, 38% is para-verbal (syntax, accent, etc.) and 7% is verbal.

Since this research, many have questioned the percentages, but reality is that we see what is said as much as we hear what is said. How many times do you “hear” the person’s professionalism before he or she actually speaks? Have you already “heard” their economic or educational level before the first word is spoken? Since we **listen** by seeing as much as we **listen** by hearing, we must become better **listeners** where we leverage all of our senses to improve the communication process.

Another researcher, Paul Ekman, studied the impact of emotions within the communication process. He identified six facial expressions that are almost universal in recognition: happiness, sadness, anger, fear, disgust and surprise. People “hear” emotions through their sense of sight. In today’s world where technology has dramatically affected the communication process especially listening from emails to video-conferencing, individuals need to truly hone their communication skills especially active **listening**.

Since communication is a process that involves both a sender and a receiver, then the process is not completed until the receiver can decode the message and if necessary return an appropriate message. Active **listening** is about understanding the communication before attempting to evaluate what has been said.

To be an active **listener** requires the receiver to be truly present during the communication process. When we are present, we **listen** for understanding instead of making judgements or assumptions.

Another active **listening** skill is to **listen** with a purpose. When we **listen** with a purpose, our goal varies and may be to gain new information or knowledge; to secure directions; solve a problem; to demonstrate an interest; or to learn about how someone else feels.

Finally, we must **listen** without the interference of our ego. What this means is that we must **listen** more than we speak. We must surrender our ego and put the focus on the sender and not on us as the receiver.

To truly **listen** for the purpose of understanding begins with our eyes and ends with our mind. Our ears are the bridge between our sense of sight and how our brain interprets the message. Finally, in the words of Mark Twain “*If the good Lord wanted us to speak more than **listen**, he would have given us 2 mouths instead of 2 ears.*”

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, M.S.  
**ADVANCED SYSTEMS,**  
**Performance Improvement & Executive Coaching**  
*Connecting Passion and Purpose to  
Double Performance in WARP Time*  
<http://www.processspecialist.com/>



## Magical Listening

Stephen Sisselman

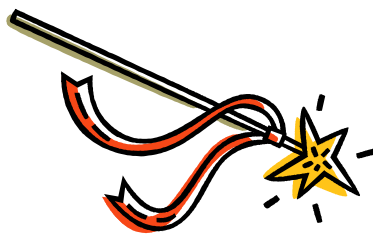
*"One man with courage makes a majority"*  
Andrew Jackson

**Listening** is the single most important aspect in person-to-person interactions. At any one moment in time, there are numerous of these interactions occurring. As a tool, **listening** can help individuals tap into those opportunities happening every moment in our lives and businesses to maximize our potential.

To maximize potential through **listening**, one is not just hearing another speak in a passive manner but actively reading the environment they are in. For example, if one is interested in learning about what it takes to provide an extraordinary customer experience as you enter a place of business, you will become more attuned to the environment. You note the customer's reactions and identify what it was that made the visit positive or negative. Once a determination is made as to what type of experience it was and the next time you return, you begin **listening** more deeply. You observe the total background of what caused the positive or negative response. Observed negative responses or exchanges are not bad. These responses lead us to understanding potential problem areas and key things to avoid if implementing a customer service program in a business or personal life.

**Listening** can be used to create relationship enhancing experiences in every individual's lives regardless of our position in a company, community or family. Every encounter with another human is an interaction and as such the interaction could be viewed as an interchangeable customer service experience between individuals. This means the role of customer and provider can actually change multiple times within one encounter. If we can view each encounter as a customer service experience we can apply the same tactics as we did in the business example. To **listen** to the environment and note whether there is a positive or negative response can lead to a path of discovery into making interactions with others more meaningful a making all encounters in life a positive customer service experience.

For this month, utilize the power of **listening** to tap into your potential to succeed in both your personal and professional lives. Remember, you have all the tools at your fingertips. Take your pointer finger and imagine it as a magic wand. Tap your head three times and \*poof\*, let the **listening** begin.



**Make everyday a day to remember!**  
Stephen Sisselman, BS, MT (ASCP), MS  
Positive Power Strategies, Inc  
[ssisselman@earthlink.net](mailto:ssisselman@earthlink.net)  
(347)558-4082

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being **extraordinary**, score your personal and profession level for **listening**:

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve my life's personal/professional purpose? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve my physical health and wellbeing? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve my mental growth and development goals? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to in my relationship with family and friends? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to in serving my community? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve my full financial growth potential? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve my full career, profession or business potential? \_\_\_

How does my **listening capacity** help me to achieve living my beliefs, ethics and beliefs? \_\_\_

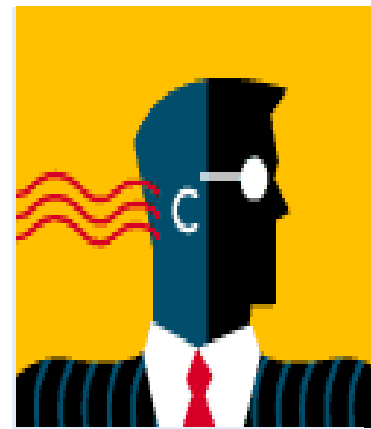
How does my **listening capacity** help to influence my ability to change and grow personally/professionally? \_\_\_

Evaluating **YOUR listening capacity** can help you to stay achieve extraordinary goals and live an amazing life. The next step is to start a **Power Choice**© goal achievement system in an area that will help you to achieve **YOUR M.A.G.I.C.A.L.**™ goals.

*If **you** want to discover some exciting tools and techniques to help you to expand **YOUR listening capacity** and to help you to double your performance potential please call:*

***"I can try to accept gracefully all things that affect my life. I can think and act, not react, I can study and learn. I can listen ..."***

Anonymous



***"When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen."***

Ernest Hemingway

Laura R. Novakowski

Positive Power Strategies, Inc.

*Inspiring People to Discover Their Capacity for Amazing Health & Wealth*

3 Thorny Apple Drive, Hunlock Creek, PA 18621

Phone: 570.477.3388 or check out the website: <http://www.positivepowerinc.com/>

Or

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

**ADVANCED SYSTEMS— Performance Improvement & Executive Coaching**

***Doubling Performance of Individuals & Businesses***

**508 Sunshine Dr., Valparaiso, IN 46385**

**Phone: 219.759.5601 check out the website:**

**<http://www.processspecialist.com>**