

CACTUS
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“POWERFUL IMPRESSIONS THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION”
2nd of a Five-Part Series

Dear Colleagues,

Human beings spend more time listening – that’s right 80% more time - than any other skill. Let’s take a moment and really think about the significance of this fact... MSPs spend more time listening to others than performing any one of their other their critical skills! How well we listen is directly related to our effectiveness in our careers and the overall satisfaction of our relationships. Practicing good listening habits is one of your most critical skills.

Red Flag Point: At a recent event where I was the keynote speaker I was introducing myself to many new people. During the reception, an attendee approached me and began asking a series of questions. Practicing good listening skills, I turned my body directly towards this person, looked her in the eyes, let her state her question without interruption and nodded my head to demonstrate understanding of the scenario presented. When she finished with each question, I paused and answered. So far so good – right? NOT! After each of her questions, when it was my turn to respond, she would consistently interrupt and divert her eyes around the room. She was definitely not engaged – or was she? Initially, I felt badly that she and I didn’t seem to connect. However, I watched her every so often “working the room” and I was shocked to see that this disconnect or her bad listening habits did not stop with me. This communication flaw continued with every intentional interaction she had. Now the good news is that this person was not an MSP. But, how many times has this experience happened to you!

This **red flag point** illustrates the importance of how MSPs must be listening leaders. Here are five key listening sensitivity tips to follow:

1. Don’t begin constructing a response in your head while the other person is speaking – **LISTEN** to the message.
2. Don’t interrupt people – **LISTEN** to the all of the words.
3. Don’t fake it by acting like you’re listening when someone else is talking – **LISTEN**, really listen.
4. Don’t reject what others say if you are not in agreement – **LISTEN** and be open to hearing other perspectives.
5. Don’t ignore body language – **LISTEN** with your ears and eyes.

These listening strategies might sound simple, but are more difficult to put into daily practice. Remember, a MSP listening leader makes ongoing efforts to really hear the speaker’s words and the meaning behind the message. They listen empathetically, demonstrating to the speaker that they understand what they heard. They stay focused on the speaker. Now, I bet some of you are thinking that these listening sensitivity tips should also be practiced by some of those with whom you interact with regularly. You are right on! Not only do I want you as MSPs to be listening leaders, I also encourage you to post these tips in your office, in the break room, on the

Medical Staff blog or bulletin board. All of us can use friendly reminders now and again because effective communication really is a two-way street!

I'll visit with you again next month to share another idea on how MSPs can make powerful impressions through effective communication.

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."
- Henry Thoreau

Until next we speak...SMILE

The MSP Competency Network™ is a leading industry initiative that provides to every MSP the opportunity to design and participate in personalized individual, partnership or group education, training and mentorship sessions. These customized sessions, using all available modalities, are designed exclusively for MSPs desiring or directed to pursue competence in the Medical (Staff) Services Profession. So, what key area(s) of MSP development is a part of your professional roadmap? What is in your career development toolbox? To get help in customizing your professional development plan, contact me at donna@teamedglobal.com or 618.830.0057.