

SUMMARY:

The difference between high performers and the highest performers often comes down to interpersonal skills. According to Dr. Henry Cloud, the basic interpersonal skill of listening may be the most effective way for leaders to build trust. In this episode, Henry explores the connection between listening, trust and performance with host Kim Simios. Uncovering counterintuitive and practical insights, they dig into why listening is important, the barriers to effective listening and how leaders can grow their listening skills.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- The differentiator between high performers and the highest performers is most often coming down to interpersonal skills.
- People do not move to your position until they feel that you understand them.
- On a bio-chemical level, the people you are leading are asking, “Am I safe?”
- People need to feel that their leaders are for them.
- Listening is the key strategy for FBI hostage negotiation.
- Barriers to listening:
 - Me first
 - Self-referent
 - Interruptions
 - Negation
 - Minimizing
- Listening does not mean that you have to agree with the other person.
- A great listening tool to try: Ask, “Is there anything that I don’t understand?”
- The first step to developing listening skills is to shut up.
- Developing listening skills:
 - Empathy
 - Open-ended questions
 - Full attention
- When an organization is under stress, people are experiencing anxiety, fear and paralysis. Listening becomes the most important leadership skill. Listening will help leaders identify what problems need to be solved.
- Listening Tour: In times of change, Henry advises leadership to identify the skeptics and to go on a tour to listen to them. The act of listening calms fears and begins to move people to get on board.
- Listening builds trust. We don’t trust people who don’t understand who we are.
- Listening leads to better results.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Dr. Henry Cloud said that listening makes people feel understood and safe. Think about: 1) A leader who made you feel safe and 2) One who didn’t. What were the differences?
2. Henry identified five key barriers to listening. Which barrier do you tend to struggle with the most?
 - Me First
 - Self-Referent
 - Interruption
 - Negation
 - Minimizing
3. Based on the conversation you heard today, what is one strategy you might try in your leadership to increase your listening skills this week?

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

[The Wall Street Journal](#)

[*Integrity* by Dr. Henry Cloud](#)

[Business Week Magazine](#)

[Michael Dell](#)

[Kevin Rollins](#)

[FBI Crisis Negotiation Unit](#)

[Ephesians 4:22-24](#)

[The Financial Crisis of 2008](#)

[Horst Schulze Room Service Story](#)

RELATED LINKS:

[Dr. Henry Cloud](#)

[Leadership University](#)

[Kim Simios](#)

[The Global Leadership Summit](#)