

- *Irrelevant* messages betray the first rule of getting people to listen—one's own self-interest. Who needs to hear something that matters only to someone else, or maybe not even that?

- *Patronizing* is insulting. If you, the teller, know that we don't know, and ask to tell us, you should be in the position of *sharing* riches, not berating us for not having them yet.

- *Unsure* or *nervous* behavior makes us *really* uncomfortable! Since we've all been there and hated it, we recognize it and feel it keenly when we see it in others and can't bear to watch it. Also—if *you're* not sure of your material or position, how can you ask *me* to get involved? I'm flying blind!

- *Hyper-intense* starts us out at too high a level. Such a person is already at a gallop while we—the blank-slate audience—can only begin with a walk. It presumes the same level of passion and information on the part of the listener that the teller has, without working on the gradual development that might get us there.

Obviously these are only primary-color descriptions, thumbnail sketches of the much more complex personal styles each of us develops and gives off when we communicate, whether to one or many. But they serve to help us analyze the process by which people who are asked to listen, respond; to become aware of what listeners perceive, how it affects them, and why they willingly listen to some and not to others.

Since we operate on a primal, instinctual level first, these basic personal-quality perceptions are in the first line of resistance, the first things we notice and respond to. We do it viscerally, instinctively, without thinking, before we go on.

But on we do go. That highly developed brain doesn't like to take a back seat for too long. So we come to the second part of what we do when we ask ourselves "Who's Telling?" We move up from the gut instinct and engage the brain in considering the request for a willing listener, for an audience.

Are You Enough?

Based on the individual situation, and whether one is basically an Achiever, Affiliator, or Influencer, a series of subconscious questions determine whether the proposed talker has enough credentials to command our attention: