

Therefore, you already have an inside track on your co-worker's self-interest. So the upshot is that the number-one way to get people to listen is to discover and show *what's in it for them*. It's to let them know that you understand their self-interest by focusing on their point of view at the start. *Before* you tell them about yours. That will motivate them to tune in.

Who's Telling

The next factor that makes people listen is how they perceive the teller. Needing to know who's telling is built into the nature of listening itself.

When you listen, you give power to another. Although the power may be temporary and you keep an active internal debate going inside as you listen, basically you're in a passive state. Something is being done *to* you. You're not in control—yet.

So listening is a big gift, given to the teller by the receiver. Therefore, who's "doing it to you," who's getting your gift, matters mightily.

Trust is, and always has been, a hard-won commodity, not freely given. Societies have always devised tests for "friend or foe." For example, do you know the origin of a salute? Why the right hand at the brow? It comes from medieval times when men in armor lifted their visors with an empty right hand to show who they were and that they had no weapon. And we *still* do it: We shake right hands and make eye contact as we greet each other.

So—whether it was showing the face or knowing the password, before a person was welcomed into our midst the first encounter had to establish his credentials, showing us who he was and how he meant to relate to us. (That's why I introduced myself to you on page one of Chapter 1. It was my verbal handshake—asking you to trust me enough to become your "teller.")

Instinctively, we have always been wary of others, needing to know what their intentions are and what to expect before we let them in. We're still wary of others today. When someone says, "Give me the power to tell you, to sell you, to hold sway while you listen," our instincts are still alert. We're still asking:

"Friend or foe?"

"Are you *for* me?"