

"I'm sorry, I don't know enough about that, but I can get it for you later today" shows that you *know* when you don't know *and* that you know how to find out. This breeds confidence!

*After a Statement, Ask!*

In a performance review, the boss will usually tell you what he/she thinks after that opening question. Stay interested and calm. Listen *very* hard for the areas of difference between what *you* think and what the *boss* thinks. Respond with equanimity (sometimes tough but work on this!) and a constructive outlook:

"I'm listening hard because I like my job and want to know whether or not I'm doing it well and if you're getting what you need from me. Let me ask you to focus further on X. I want very much to know more about how you think I can improve that." Don't grovel, but show your interest in fixing it *with* the boss's suggestions.

### **Answering Critical Questions**

The other general category of questions come from an incident in which you messed up, or at least *something* went wrong. The biggest problem you have is being able to still the several voices inside that affect how you hear and how you answer.

Let's turn to our three work types and some typical responses they might have to this kind of exchange:

An Affiliator subordinate takes it all very personally. Usually fearful of hostility, whatever the issue, Affiliators want the boss finally to forgive them.

An Achiever boss can't understand the Affiliators response. He/she wants to take a rational, task-oriented view:

"I thought we had a clear set of standards. How did this happen?" He may actually get angry at *himself* for imperfectly organizing the *task*, but he can't begin to hear the self-absorbed approach of the Affiliator.

An Influencer boss demands: "Why didn't you do this?" He/she wants to know that the foul-up didn't come from your deliberately *defying* him and his authority. He/she wants to see your willingness to make it right. He wonders about his delegation of authority; aware of the empowering relationship between authority and responsibility, he'll worry about whether he gave you too much or too little.

When answering criticism: