

Simply put, understanding your listener's needs is the bottom line.

WHAT MAKES PEOPLE LISTEN

Three basic factors shape the answer to every potential listener's challenging unspoken question: "Why should I listen?"

- Self-Interest
- Who's Telling
- How They Tell It

Self-Interest

Let's not get too theoretical. Since you belong to the same species as your potential listeners, to figure out what basically motivates *them*, think about *yourself* for a moment. What, really, deep down is the prime motivator that pushes you to do *whatever* you do—not just listen?

It's that little self-spirit you were born with, the one I mentioned in Chapter 1, the one that went underground but that never really went away as your parents helped you get socialized.

Think about yourselves. Isn't self-interest at the center of what makes you, all of us, tick? It motivates you to want, to pursue, to be attracted to anything that looks like it's practical, fulfilling, enriching, or helpful for you. And it never works if someone else simply *tells* you it's good for you. You have to see its applicability for yourself.

Sometimes you even get attracted to what you've learned you *shouldn't* do, because other self-interest components (pleasure; revolt against the rules; "just this once "; to heck with the other guy) outweigh what the head and the conscience try to restrict.

Gratifying one's self-interest is an instinct that motivates us without even needing to come to the conscious surface too often.

Test yourself. What makes *you* listen or pay attention?

Examples:

- The newspaper. What do you read first and why? What gets you past the headlines? What gets you to turn to the follow-up page? Isn't it