

ACTIVE LISTENING

By Everett Bowes

EYES: BUSINESS PRACTICES

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.” – Bryant McGill.

Since our eyes indicate where our thoughts are eye contact with the person speaking is one of the easiest ways we can _____ to the person talking, and one of the fastest ways the speaker _____ that connections are being made.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

If you want to give someone confidence look at them while they are talking.

- When someone walks in to your office deliberately **put devices down**, or turn away from your computer. In fact, I often will turn my phone or tablet upside down when someone is talking, so notifications don't continue to pull my eyes to the device.
- When in meetings **don't take your phone**. I got to the point where all I could take to meetings was a tablet and pen.
- **If you are doodler** (like me) understand that when you're doodling you are likely not sending the signals you want to send.
- When someone is speaking, if you have to have a device open **tell the person why it's out** and why you are going to keep looking at it. They will respect your forthrightness.
- Or, when you must turn your eyes to something else (like a phone or computer) **ask the speaker to hold on a moment**. Tell them you have to briefly look at something, and you don't want to miss a thing.

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EYES: BUSINESS PRACTICES (CONTINUED)

- **Know your pitfalls:** my pitfall is any flat screen TV. It doesn't matter what's playing... if the tv is on my eyes will be pulled toward it. I have to intentionally sit with my back to the tv so I don't get distracted! Also, active hallways tend to snag my eyes. Again, I have to intentionally sit with my back to a busy doorway or hallway so my eyes stay on the speaker.

Lastly, we already talked about how vital listening is to leadership. **Show your leaders the respect they deserve, and build your own leadership equity**, by making sure your eyes are connected to the person talking.