



What Motivates You To Listen (part 2)?

Listen Intently, Part 6 of 6

Why don't we learn from history, listen to our parents, or alter our behavior based on experience relayed to us by others, even when we – individually or collectively – would benefit greatly by doing so? What is it that prevents us from listening and what would help us listen better?

In the last issue we explored that the need to be right, driven by fear and the desire to impose order, prevents us from listening to facts and left off with what motivates us to listen.

Not surprisingly, psychological research reveals there is no one-size-fits-all regarding what drives us to move forward and evolve, but there is consensus that it's crucial to do so.

It turns out that understanding what motivates you and what inputs you listen to provides insight into important issues that must be addressed if human beings are to achieve the levels of character and competencies necessary to thrive, or even simply to survive, in the face of the accelerating change to which we are now exposed. Motivation, then, is an important area of study not just for you but also for the health and continuation of civilization and the planet.

So, You Want to Start a Business?

Written by Jamie Wolf

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Historically, rewards and punishment – in the school, home, and work settings – were used as motivators to drive people to have more of what they wanted (rewards) and less of what they didn't want (punishment.) This goes back to the educational construct of right and wrong, a model that current research shows no longer works to change or manipulate behavior and outcomes. Today we know that autonomy, mastery, and purpose are the motivators leading to better performance and personal satisfaction.

Most have heard of Maslow and his theory of Hierarchy of Needs. He studied human motivation and concluded that "deficiencies" must first be addressed and met before there is motivation to move to the growth levels. The foundation, or most basic need, obliges one to have enough food and water to sustain life, and next comes the need to be out of danger. Rising above these most basic deficiencies brings one to the stage of needing to belong and be loved – in other words, to affiliate with others and be accepted. Originally Maslow's only other level prior to the pinnacle of self-actualization had been the growth stage in which we seek esteem: to achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition.

Maslow amended his original proposal by adding stages. Now, following the need for esteem, he concludes there is the cognitive stage in which we come to know, to understand, and explore, followed by the desire for aesthetic, in which we seek symmetry, order, and beauty. Self-actualization, Maslow originally asserted, was the pinnacle where we sought to find self-fulfillment and realize our potential. However, he now suggests we are motivated to strive further, to achieve self-transcendence in order to connect to something beyond the ego or to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential.

Maslow's tenet is that as one becomes more self-actualized and self-transcendent, one becomes wiser - developing the ability to efficiently and effectively make decisions and solve problems based on personal experience - and one becomes fluid in interacting with the environment in a wide variety of situations. At this stage one's affect is no longer fearfully driven by the need to maintain order and to be right but has advanced to managing complicated questions and utilizing effective decision-making and unbiased problem solving.

Interestingly, researchers determined that one of the most reliable methods of understanding motivation is simply to ask someone what they want, give it to them, and watch what they do next. Will you be hampered by fear or will you be ready to learn and grow?

So humor me by playing along. In order to identify your most important needs and potential

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goals, I'd like you to imagine what life would be like if time, money, and health posed no barriers in your life. That is, what would you do this week, this month, next month, if you had all the money, time, health and energy needed to engage in those activities and you were secure that the same conditions would be available again next year? What is keeping you from engaging in those activities presently? If I could really follow you as you develop and implement an action plan to work towards those goals, I'd track how much effort you expended and whether your effort was sustained; in doing so it would become much clearer what is actually holding you back or motivating you. Your actions, more than your words, would reveal whether you have evolved to a stage in which you are ready to learn from someone else's experience, listen to a mentor, and alter your behavior to adapt. Are you motivated to listen?

This is the conclusion of the series on Listening Intently. Next time I'll begin the topic of developing yourself. A great place to start is the bookstore. Are you motivated to buy local and support the Beaufort Bookstore at 2127 Boundary Street? You can find books on many topics including my book *Start Over, Start Now, Ten Keys to Success in Business and Life!*

Beaufort resident Jamie Wolf is the author of 'Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to SUCCESS in Business and Life' and ten accompanying guidebooks. ☐ If you're ready to be Master of your Fate and Captain of your Soul, she invites you to come on board! Jamie offers online courses and coaching for entrepreneurs and people interested in starting over or in starting their own business. Visit her at <http://www.thestartover.com>

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