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The unspeakable truth

February 2011

A silent dialogue goes on in every meeting room up and down the country every single day.

Right now, somewhere, there will be a strategy meeting going on where a junior associate feels they cannot speak up, an appraisal will be going on where an employee doesn't ask for more money, and a sales pitch will be in full swing where the client doesn't express his real worries or needs.

If you want to become the master of your own corporate destiny you'd better learn to listen to this unspoken dialogue. Because if you don't predict and answer these unasked questions the gap between someone's true wants and your efforts to satisfy them will just get wider and wider.

What we want to say but don't would often be more revealing about our true desires than anything we vocalise in public. If these thoughts are addressed in the right way then everyone can go away happier for the experience, but often they can bubble to the surface and damage working relationships, careers and business deals.

Just ask Richard Keys and Andy Gray, perfect examples of frustration bubbling to the surface. Or what about the phone tapping scandal that's ablaze in the headlines right now where all sorts of people have been caught giving very different opinions to those they have expressed in public when they thought no one else was listening?

Then of course there's the WikiLeaks furore, which is set to run on and on, embarrassing the political leaders of numerous nations for very similar reasons.



Talking without words

The art of reading others through their body language is a complex and often unpredictable skill, but in the arena of a business meeting or pitch it can give insight into the thoughts of the person or people in front of you, giving you the ability to shape and adapt to their level, needs and reactions.

To see just how important this skill can be to your success in business, read our latest article ["It's not what you're saying; it's what they're seeing"](#).



I'm sorry, did you not say something?

Selling yourself, your company, and your products and services means understanding your client's needs, even when they don't express them to you. Part predictive mind reading, part experience, and part intelligent questioning – the ability to answer a prospect's unasked questions is the key to unlocking their loyalty.

But beware – do not make too many assumptions or you could be running off in the wrong direction!

Our article ["Just because they don't ask doesn't mean you shouldn't answer"](#) explains more about the need to predict, listen and adapt rather than read from a generic script when pitching.



Tip of the Month

If you don't start speaking your client's unspoken language then you run the very real risk of missing the opportunity of developing relationships that could become the foundations of your organisation's future.



Joke of the Month

The oldest profession...

A doctor, an engineer and a management consultant were arguing about what was the oldest profession in the world.

The doctor started... "Well, in the Bible, it says that God created Eve from a rib taken from Adam's body. This must have required surgery, and so I can claim with a high degree of confidence that mine is the oldest profession in the world."

The engineer responded... "But earlier in the book of Genesis, it states that God created the order of the heavens and the earth from out of the chaos. This was the first and certainly the most impressive application of civil engineering. Therefore, dear doctor, you are wrong: mine is surely the oldest profession in the world."

The management consultant leaned back in his chair, smiled, and then said confidently, "Ah, but who do you think created the chaos?"

- The Incisive Edge team



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