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The Listening Gap Between Sight and Sound

By Catherine Franz

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The truth is there is a gap between sight and hearing, between visual and auditory, between seeing and believing. And the fact is that this gap creates a billion dollar industry. Improving communication has billions of books on how-tos sitting on shelves and training services galore. And the topic keeps on selling.

People push themselves to improve their verbal and writing skills as a prediction to their increased success. How many have asked the question that Dr. Stephen Covey continually reminds us to ask, "Is it S.M.A.R.T.?" That is, is it specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely. If you use SMART as a measurement, the fact is, it doesn't work. Is great communication achievable and realistic? Is it SMART?

We want to believe so. We want to hope so. We want so badly to stand up in front of millions and say something as wisely as, "I have a dream...." Or simpler, we say something wise to our children or friends. Yet, have you ever asked if this was even possible? Martin Luther King didn't write this speech all by himself and possibly didn't even create the phrase first. Yet we assume it to be. Based on our personal growth with sight and sound since we assume we can do it all alone, all by ourselves. Has any wise communication ever really been written all by one person? Not usually. There also seems to be at least a spiritual hand.

The Listening Gap Between Sight and Sound

Did you know that we see things at 1,086 miles per second and we hear at 1,100 feet per second? Our culture is speeding up because it's crafted a "seeing is best" mindset. Television, Internet, movies, the list goes on. If the visual world is communication, then is it based on visual alone? It seems to be going in that direction, doesn't it?

The truth is that never the two shall meet -- seeing and hearing. They are too far apart in the spectrum. In order to hear, truly hear, one must slow down to what seems like a baby crawl in comparison to the speed of light and our sight's reflection.

Yet, it takes the two to fully understand communication does it not. Not sure, then that is correct. How would the visually impaired or hearing impaired communicate then?

What is the speed of feeling? Is it faster or slower than light or faster or slower than hearing? Is it measured by feet or by miles? No one knows, I don't think. Its never been quantitatively tested, at least anywhere I could find. Yet can it be? If you would measure feeling, what would that be? Maybe in nanoseconds. Feeling is instinctive and touch is a sense. Then is feeling a sense as well? Or are they both the same? What is different between feeling and hearing? Can we define its difference?

Do you sit and watch television with a sense of touch or smell? Not at least from my blurb tube you can't. Did you ever think of hearing a television program? Of turning your back to the box and watching the show? Why not? Why not try it and feel this exact disconnect, this gap, that I'm talking about. Strain your ears to hear. Learn again what it means to hear.

What brings sight and sound together? Meaning and definition becomes only throughout our growing years. When a parent points to something moving in the air and calls it a butterfly or a plane. When we sat in class and see pictures of the Eiffel Tower or a bullfight in Spain. There was no sound. All we could do was imagine, place assumptions on what sound could be, would be. And wonder if there will be a time when we will be there, when we will hear. And be able to match a picture of an eagle with one actually flying above.

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We see a picture of a beautiful woman, you know, the perfect 10, in some magazine. You wish to be like her or to want her. Then one day you meet her in the street and hear her voice. It squeaks as if you were stroking chalk backwards across a blackboard. You can't wait to run and hide. The disconnect, the gap, was there. But gosh darn it, she's a 10, you say. In a split second from sight to sound, the desire to be like her to have her dropped, it wasn't the same.

It is said, "seeing is believing," is that the truth? How many of us know that isn't always the truth, yet we've heard it so frequently there are assumptions tied to it that makes it seem like the truth. How many assumptions have you made because of things you've seen and heard, made between the gap, between the speed of sight and the slower hearing?

What would change in your daily routine if you began really hearing, slowing down to 1,100 feet per second? What would you lose? What would you gain? Would the gain be positive? All thoughts to think about, to mull over in our simple yet complicated little minds.

I encourage you to shift a little in your life and begin to give equal value to hearing if you can. To listening to the universal sounds, to what is far below the speed of light. Light that gives you the ability to see. But to begin to see with your ears.

"It's not what you say but how you say it," is a phrase frequently told. Is it the truth? Or is the real truth how everyone else hears it that makes a difference?

The truth is that the gap can never be brought together. All our senses are on different parts of our rainbow. Don't lose sight of hearing. Practice differently today and tomorrow. Lie in bed and hear the walls. Hear the breeze whenever outdoors. Hear the plants grow. Yes, you can once you learn to hear again. Hear your heart beating and watch the cravings for things you know you shouldn't have go by. Learn discernment between the two. Close your eyes in the next meeting, what do you hear? What do you not?

As Shakespeare once said, "That is the question?" This is from me to you and for fuel for thought. Just so you grow.

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Mind Your Dishwasher Air Gap

By Scott Hares

Have you noticed your kitchen dishwasher air gap lately?. That's the thing that mounts either directly to your kitchen sink, or the counter top. It looks like a small upside down cup with vent holes. In the event that your kitchen's dishwasher drainage should back up, this little gadget makes sure the backed up water gets directed into your sink instead of your floor – and the dishwasher can empty out.

It's amazing how every time you turn around, the air gap is pointed away from the kitchen sink. You want to make sure the air gap actually points towards the kitchen sink so that it can do its job properly. If you have an inattentive spouse or house cleaners, the dishwasher air gap seems to constantly point in any direction other than the kitchen sink.

In this condition if your dish washer were to back up, the water would spill from the air gap all over the place, all over the remodeled counter top, down the refaced cabinets, into the cabinets, and onto the floor – probably ruining that expensive new kitchen cabinet refacing job that looks so good. You could even wind up damaging the flooring depending on what kind you have.

There might be some models of air gap that have a way to limit the air gap to point at the kitchen sink, or perhaps a way of modifying the air gap so that it can not rotate out of position, but it's the kind of thing that should not be necessary.

If your dishwasher air gap has a habit of getting rotated around until it no longer points into your sink, it would be a good idea to make a habit of taking note of it whenever you use the sink – correct the situation and make sure it points into the kitchen sink. You will be so thankful you did when that dishwasher finally does back up.

Scott Hares writes for

A free informational resource for anyone

considering a new kitchen remodeling project.



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