

HEARING WHAT OTHERS SAY

A research organization asked several thousand people, “What are the most serious faults of executives in dealing with their associates and subordinates?”

By the way, this also applies to teachers dealing with their students and parents with their children. Several faults could be chosen. What do you think was mentioned most often?

Well, 68 percent of the respondents said the biggest problem they see in the workplace is a consistent failure to see the other person’s point of view. In fact, that was mentioned twice as often as anything else.

Apparently, the people they value most in the workplace are those who try to understand others. That is true in all kinds of relationships.

Steve Goodier, ordained United Methodist minister, author and founder and publisher of *Your Life Support System* newsletter, wrote on this subject: “We don’t always need others to agree with us, but we do need to feel heard. We need them to at least understand what we are saying. In fact, feeling heard may well be one of our greatest emotional needs. Without it, we can feel disheartened, we believe we don’t matter, and we find ourselves increasingly unhappy and lonely.”

Grade-school children, he added, “demonstrate this important human need to be heard. In some schools, children seldom talk about personal problems with their teachers or the school principal for fear of consequences.”

Goodier asked an insightful question, and the answer may surprise you.

The question: Do you know which adult in the school they sometimes feel safest talking to?

The answer: The school custodian.

“Often, the custodian is a person who will listen without judging; an adult who won’t discount what was said,” Goodier added.



When we decide to try to hear another’s point of view, something amazing happens. We can make allies out of enemies and friends out of strangers. It’s a way of building strong emotional bridges between people.

Not just any bridges, either – bridges to the heart.

Making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2 ESV).

–Beecher Hunter