

KENJI MATSUSHITA ON COMMUNICATION

PRE-LISTENING

A. **Understanding vocabulary.** The following words are from an interview you will hear. Match the word to the best definition by writing the letter in the correct space.

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
A. Communication (adjective, noun)	___ To think that something is true without any evidence or proof.
B. Challenge (noun)	___ Important but hidden; something that is underneath or basic to something else.
C. Assume (verb)	___ Related to the process of expressing ideas, feelings, or information.
D. Issue (noun)	___ A deep understanding of something.
E. Underlying (adjective)	___ A problem or worry; an annoyance; a topic that are people discussing or debating
F. Insight (noun)	___ A difficulty to overcome; something that is difficult; something that tests you

B. Understanding expressions. The following expressions are used in the audio clip you will hear. Match the expression to the meaning by writing the correct letter in each box.

EXPRESSION	MEANING
A. "to rub off on someone"	___ to find out what the real problem is
B. "to open up"	___ to become infected (literal meaning); to get worse because you don't deal with something
C. "to fester"	___ to share your deep feelings or your true opinions
D. "to get to the bottom of something"	___ to make another person similar to you in some way

C. Using vocabulary and expressions. Now complete the following sentences with the correct academic word or expression from the previous page (Note: you may need to change the number or verb form):

1. He has great _____ skills. He should lead our on-site safety workshops.
2. Instead of telling her manager how she felt, she let her anger _____ in her mind.
3. I generally _____ that people are honest. However, my co-worker generally _____ that people are trying to cheat us. (*same word, different forms*)
4. When I first arrived in Canada, I faced a lot of _____. I needed to learn English, find a job, find place to live, and help my kids adjust.
5. After working together for many years, they have started to _____ each other. They like the same manufacturers, choose the same products, and even wear similar work clothes.
6. The speaker provided us with fascinating _____ into why accidents occur.
7. Sally misses a lot of work. I'm going to sit down and talk to her, and _____ it.
8. One of the _____ causes of machinery breakdown is poor maintenance.
9. She finally _____ and explained to her manager why she felt she needed to quit.
10. She has _____ with employees who text during work hours.

D. Think of the best manager you've had, and the worst. Make a list of the characteristics that made those people particularly good or bad leaders.

GOOD LEADER CHARACTERISTICS	BAD LEADER CHARACTERISTICS

E. **Predicting.** In the interview you will listen to, Kenji Matsushita, a successful businessman, is asked what communication skills he has developed to be an effective leader. Brainstorm. What do you think he might answer?

DURING LISTENING

A. Noting down main ideas. Listen to the audio and complete the list of important communication skills mentioned by Kenji:

- _____
- _____
- Not assuming you know what someone is talking about
- _____
- Not letting people fester problems

B. Listening for details and drawing conclusions. Read the questions below. Predict the answers, then listen again and answer the questions:

1. What was the most important thing Kenji did and did not do when talking to the engineer from India?

2. What does “Your tongue can make you deaf” mean?

3. How did Kenji’s mother influence her son?

4. Imagine that one of Kenji’s employees is upset about something. He starts to tell Kenji his problem, and then says “Never mind. It’s not a big issue.” How do you think Kenji would respond?

POST-LISTENING

A. **Applying knowledge to real life.** Read the conversation on the next page. Based on what Kenji said in the audio, what advice do you think Kenji might give to Devon, the manager?

CONVERSATION	ADVICE
<p>Devon: Hey Robin, how's your new project going?</p> <p>Robin: OK. Well... mainly OK. A few minor challenges...</p> <p>Devon: Yeah...as long as they are minor. But isn't that the way it always goes! There are always issues! The other day I had troubles with the mainframe, and I needed our IT hardware guy to come in. He never answers his phone! And I left messages for him. Nothing. Sometimes I wonder if the people in that department are even there! And then we weren't able to complete the project we were working. Now our timelines are messed up. These issues can be frustrating. It's probably to do with the timelines, right?</p> <p>Robin: Well, kind of...</p> <p>Devon: Ah, no worries. You're so good at solving problems. I'm sure you'll have no trouble getting it running smoothly!</p> <p>Robin: Yeah...it's no big deal. Things always work out in the end.</p> <p>Devon: Great! I'm glad to hear the project is going so well. Hey...I've got to run. Talk later, OK?</p> <p>Robin: Sure... See you later.</p>	

B. Writing (on your own) or Speaking (with a partner):

With a partner: Role-play the dialogue, taking turns in the role of Robin and Devon.

- As Robin, think of any work-related task or project that you might find challenging. Start off hinting that you have a problem (as in the conversation on the previous page), and give details only when prompted.
- As Devon, be a good listener. Dig. Get to the bottom of the problem. Don't make assumptions, and don't let your tongue make you deaf! Also, the following are all good ways to show that you are really listening: eye contact, nodding, short responses (mmhmm, really? oh no), prompting questions, clarification requests and summarizing to check your comprehension.

OR

On your own: Re-write the dialogue as you think the conversation SHOULD have gone. Use your imagination to fill in details about Maria's project.

Devon: Hey Robin, how's your new project going?

Robin: OK. Well... mainly OK. A few minor challenges...

Devon:
