



## A Mysterious But Powerful Way To Improve Listening

By Michael Linsin on October 21, 2017

We've covered the topic of [speaking so students will listen](#) extensively here at SCM.

We've talked about the importance of not repeating yourself.

We've talked about volume and pacing.

We've talked about timing, pausing, brevity, clarity, and eye contact.

But what we have yet to cover is perhaps the single most important key to improving listening.

It's a strategy that isn't as straightforward as those mentioned above.

In fact, why it works so well is a bit of a mystery. Because, you see, it's not about what you do. It's about what you believe.

So what is it?

**It's conviction.**

It's the feeling or belief *behind* your words. When you speak with conviction, it sends a signal along an alternative wavelength, reaching students just as strong as when it left your mouth.

It lets them know that what you say matters, that it's important and worth listening to. It's something they can feel and sense in their bones.

So where does this level of conviction come from?

Well, it doesn't come from trying to convince yourself you really mean it. It doesn't come from false confidence, deepening your voice, or pretending you're serious this time.

It comes from doing what you say you're going to do. It comes from **your consistency** and follow through.

It comes from an almost obsessive desire to show your students, prove to them, that you can be counted on every hour of every day.

When you say something, your students have to know they can take it to the bank.

For every time you go back on your word or let misbehavior go without the consequence you promised, you weaken your influence and lose trust in the eyes of your students.

**You also lose it in your own eyes.**

To speak with the weightiness needed to get *even students you've just met* to listen to you, you must have a near fanatical commitment to following through.

There is an unmistakable aura that accompanies teachers with authentic conviction, a distinct vibration of speech that is borne of the perfect symmetry between words and actions.

Do what you say and when you say you're going to do it, and you'll speak with a mysterious power that can move mountains.

That causes students to lean in, lock their eyes on you . . .

And listen.