



Volume 1, Issue 9

December 2010

*Understanding customer needs and trends.  
Honing your message and strategies to meet market demands.  
Building a reputation to create and sustain your leadership.  
Demonstrating value.*

***These are all paramount to your success.***

Inspiration and ideas come from a wide variety of sources. The ability to integrate new thoughts and make the strategy + communications + leadership link helps companies and executives alike elevate their performance.

*Because it's challenging at the top, [The Aerie Company](#) offers you useful and thought provoking ideas to help you soar to new heights. Enjoy these latest insights.*



## **In This Issue**

[Lessons from Listening in 2010](#)

[New Links](#)

[About The Aerie Company](#)

## **Quick Links**



## **Lessons from Listening in 2010**

***"It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."***  
*-- Sir Oliver Wendell Holmes, medical reformer and poet*

Of all the leadership skills, listening is the most valuable but probably the least understood. Those who listen only sometimes remain ordinary leaders. The exceptional ones are those who never stop listening. They learn before others about unseen problems and opportunities and that helps them


become true market leaders.


At The Aerie Company we are passionate about communication and how it builds market leadership. By listening, we help ourselves and our clients stay open to new ideas, often hear what isn't being said and find ways to solve problems and capitalize on opportunities. Yet like any skill, it takes practice. Last month as we encouraged our network to refine their skills as part of the National Day of Listening, sponsored by oral history project [StoryCorps](#), we were struck by the feedback our readers had as they shared what they'd learned by being better listeners.


So as we wrap up 2010, there is no better time to consider accomplishments and commit to use those lessons learned to help clients and colleagues continue to demonstrate their value and expand their market presence and leadership.

Here are some of our key insights from this past year.

- **Have a clear purpose** – everyone has a story that reveals their value, but often companies and individuals struggle with how to weave it together. Simply stated, your purpose is solving a customer problem. Because you've been listening, you have a unique understanding of the problem and can show your value in how and why you solve it better than others. Changing the face of chronic disease with medical technologies may seem a grand purpose, but that's exactly what Medtronic does. From communication with customers to strategic alliances to marketing campaigns to employee communication, it's clear that the patient is at the center of everything they do. In fact, at employee meetings, people who have been helped by Medtronic devices are featured in video vignettes and live appearances to reinforce help ensure everyone understands how their functions advance the company's purpose.


- **Be patient** – Business tycoon Donald Trump has always preached watch, listen and learn. He knows from experience that you can't know it all yourself and anyone who thinks they do is destined for mediocrity. So while we are an impatient society, those with the measurable plan who continually listen to customers, colleagues and competitors will be the companies and executives that move forward with better solutions, make quick mid-course corrections and respond more rapidly to opportunities. Consider the uncertainty that still remains around the healthcare reform act. Thankfully for employers, the health, wellness and aging services industries understand how the secret of patience is doing something else in the meanwhile and they have been actively working on more engaging solutions to support millions of new consumers who will have access to the system.


- **Be persistent** – yes, you need to stay on the radar screen of your target audience, but remember that communication goes in two directions so you need to listen at least as much as you need to talk. Today life demands our participation so in this super connected world, companies and executives can ill afford to be introverts. Be open to how you keep the lines open with all your various stakeholders from the ones who embrace technology and social media to those who need an integrated marketing campaign to reinforce your unique benefits to those who prefer face to face contact.



You've all heard the joke "*how do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice.*" With a professional violinist and musician advocate sister, I know it takes more than patience and persistence. It requires a combination of talent, communication, focus and a damn good ear –

parallel skills for market leaders. Few of us have realized the career visions we had as nine year olds like my sister, but what I know she and other leaders says is that it's just as much about practicing as it is about listening. And yes, my sister has performed at Carnegie Hall. She's got a return engagement with her Nashville Symphony in the next year and I'll be one of her many fans listening closely for new ideas.

What's your industry equivalent of getting heard at Carnegie Hall? If you need support to help identify, articulate and communicate your value in 2011 and beyond, [The Aerie Company](#) is listening. Please contact us at [info@aeriecompany.com](mailto:info@aeriecompany.com) or 847-556-8873.

## New Links

*Links to help you communicate more effectively.*

**[Bring Your Data to Life](#)** – with diminishing attention spans, you need to grab reader attention particularly with your important data. Check out these free info graphic tools.

**[ChicagoHouse.org](#)** - in recognition of World AIDS Day earlier this month, we share this link with a superb organization that has evolved with the times supporting people, families and children impacted by HIV/AIDS. I had the privilege of serving as one of the group's first board members in the 1980s and I'm proud to be part of their legacy. Chicago House was there at the beginning and will be here until there is a cure.

See our website at [www.aeriecompany.com](http://www.aeriecompany.com) for more links.

## About The Aerie Company

**Because it's challenging at the top**, The Aerie Company collaborates with organizations and executives to identify, articulate and communicate their value.

For more information on how we can help you build market leadership that demonstrates your distinctive benefits and communications impact, visit our website or contact us at [info@aeriecompany.com](mailto:info@aeriecompany.com).



*Suzanne Glare*

**Watch for regular updates from [The Aerie Company](#) on best practices, advice on communication and market leadership development, and other insights we gain as devoted lifelong learners to help you demonstrate your value and improve your performance.**