

CABE Network 17 September 2008

Claire Pedrick, Director **3D Coaching**, gave a talk entitled **"Listening in the current economic climate – to God, to our organisation, to our colleagues and to ourselves."** Bringing in examples from organisations and from the bible, Claire explored some of the issues she meets every day in her work and looked at how faith has a unique contribution to make to the workplace.

In all of the work she does, Claire works with individuals or organisations to help them become the best they can be. Throughout her career, this has been her focus: teaching in rural Kenya; running an Information and Advice Service for people wanting to work in aid and development; and, for the last 11 years, in a pure coaching and training role. Claire established 3D Coaching to fully focus on supporting people and organisations become the best they can be. Claire believes that people can do anything but they can't do everything and works to ensure that clients have both a sense of possibility and of honesty with themselves as they focus on their own or their organisation's development. She works with people to be very clear about what they bring and how they will move forward.

Below are some notes from Claire's talk...

Listening sounds simple but most of the time we listen through ears which distort our ability to really listen – for example:

- How does it affect me?
- How does it connect with my story?
- How is it against my agenda/priorities?
- How can I solve the problem?
- In particular ways we have been trained to listen e.g. to diagnose, to analyse etc.
- Through our own worldview...

We listen through so much 'stuff' that there is little space left to listen to people at work, to listen to their 'stories'. And listening takes time which we don't think we have in our speeding up world.

We need to learn to listen and to listen just to hear what the other person is saying. It takes practice, but it is worth it, it is transformational. It is recognised as an important skill at senior management but is seen as indulgent at middle management.

Christianity has something to offer about listening.

- Our worldview is bigger – it is not just about me, we are externally referenced. "Love your neighbour as yourself."
- Jesus knew the value of listening as he took his disciples away from the crowds to be quiet, to listen to God and to listen to their hearts.
- Elijah (1 Kings) had to practice listening to hear God in the gentle whisper not the loud noise.
- Ecclesiastes tells us there is "a time to be silent and a time to speak"

We need to learn to listen to ourselves. At times of crisis e.g. current economic crisis we tend towards short-term thinking which may lead us to the wrong long-term solution. We have a huge opportunity to consider what we want to do with the rest of our life, if we have the guts and make the time to really listen. We have to make

time and space, clear away the noise and listen on a higher level – to the important not the urgent, listen to heart not just the economics.

Through listening to ourselves and others we learn. It is a real gift to others when we listen, without interrupting!

We need to learn to listen more to God, ourselves, our customers, our colleagues... Really listen to people's hopes, fears, dreams. "It is a gift we can offer as the people of God to the people in our workplace."

*Claire Pedrick's talk was recorded and is available for download from the resources page of CAFE's the Principles for Business website:
<http://www.principlesforbusiness.com/resources.php>.*

For more information about 3D coaching go to their website: www.3dcoaching.com