

Be a Poor Listener by Dennis Gaskill

Being a good listener is usually a virtue, but there are times when you are better off not listening to what others think. If our predecessors had listened to their naysayers, we'd be without the telephone, radio, and many other things we take for granted today. See what I mean...

- * This "telephone" has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.

- Western Union internal memo, 1876

- * Everything that can be invented has been invented.

- Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899

- * The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?

- Response to David Sarnoff, seeking investors in radio, 1920's

- * Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?

- H.M. Warner, Warner Brothers, 1927

- * The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C' grade, the idea must be feasible.

- A Yale professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing an overnight delivery service. (Smith later founded Federal Express)

- * We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out.

- Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962

- * Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible.

- Lord Kelvin, president, Royal Society, 1895

- * Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value.

- Marechal Ferdinand Foch, Professor, Ecole Superieure de Guerre

- * Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction.

- Pierre Pachet, Professor of Physiology at Toulouse, 1872

- * So we went to Atari and said, "Hey, we've got this amazing thing, even built with some of your parts, and what do you think about funding us? Or we'll give it to you. We just want to do it. Pay our salary, we'll come work for you." And they said no. So then we went to Hewlett-Packard, and they said, "Hey, we don't need you. You haven't got through college yet."

- Apple founder Steve Jobs on attempts to get Atari and H-P interested in the personal computer

- * Drill for oil? You mean drill into the ground to try and find oil? You're crazy.

- Response to Edwin L. Drake trying to enlist workers to drill for oil in 1859

- * The abdomen, the chest, and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon.

- Sir John Eric Ericksen, British surgeon, 1873

The next time you have an idea that you believe in, if you are ridiculed or someone tells you it will never fly, don't give up, give yourself to it fully and show them what it means to make dreams come true.

"Don't be afraid of the space between your dreams and reality. If you can dream it, you can make it so."

~ Belva Davis

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