



Welcome back!

Happy Tuesday! Welcome back to **Leadership Unscripted**.

Last week, we dove into Courageous Conversations—how to navigate those necessary but tough dialogues with clarity, compassion, and courage. But starting the conversation is just step one. What happens next—Authentic Listening—is just as crucial.

Quick personal reflection:

Early in my leadership journey, someone gave me some honest feedback: *"Paula, you're hearing me, but I don't feel you're really listening."* **Ouch.** That feedback stung because it was true. It was also life-changing. From then on, I committed myself to mastering the art of authentic listening—not just hearing, but fully understanding.

Why Authentic Listening Matters

Let's talk honestly for a second: Have you ever been in a conversation and realized halfway through that you're already planning your response rather than truly listening? I know I have. (Yes, the "communication expert" herself struggles too!)

Here's the truth: Authentic listening isn't passive; it's active. It's intentional. It's an art, and mastering it transforms your relationships, leadership, and influence. When people feel genuinely heard, trust grows, walls come down, and deeper connections form.

Ready to listen better, lead better, and connect deeper? Let's dive in

Leadership Insight: Active Listening Checklist

As you continue your courageous conversations from last week, here's a quick and practical checklist to strengthen your authentic listening skills immediately:

 Pause and Give Full Attention

Remove distractions, make eye contact, and truly be present.

 Listen with Curiosity (not just to respond)

Stay curious about what's shared. Resist responding until the speaker finishes —this is critical!

 Reflect and Clarify

Paraphrase points to confirm understanding. Ask open-ended questions like: "Tell me more about that."

 Notice Nonverbal Cues

Tune into body language, tone, and facial expressions. Often overlooked, these signals speak volumes.

 Validate and Acknowledge

Acknowledge feelings sincerely: "I hear you, and I understand why this matters." (Only say this if you mean it! - Remember we are talking about authentic listening!)

Action Step for the Week:

Use the checklist in your next challenging or courageous conversation. Notice how authentic listening transforms not just the conversation, but also your relationships.

What I'm Up To:

I'm one week away from speaking at the **Leadership Experience Tour!** You can still [grab a virtual ticket](#) to get a full-year access to great leadership insights. Big thanks to everyone who's already secured theirs!

Book update: I had my third reader complete the book. I am excited now to start the final editing! This is a process that is tough but gives me joy!

Final Thought:

Authentic listening requires intentionality, consistency, and honesty with yourself. This week, commit to being fully present when listening, especially in your most challenging interactions. How did you do? Reply to this email—I read every response!

Reader Spotlight:



*PAULA,
I LOVE THIS... ESPECIALLY 'LISTEN NOT
TO RESPOND BUT TO UNDERSTAND.'
I'M KEEPING THIS EMAIL IN MY
TOOLBOX BECAUSE I, TOO, STRUGGLE
WITH HAVING COURAGEOUS (I USED
TO CALL THEM DIFFICULT, BUT WILL
NOW SAY COURAGEOUS!)
CONVERSATIONS.
THANK YOU FOR SHARING!*

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I love hearing from you! Here's a great response from last week's newsletter—keep them coming!

With appreciation,

Paula R Jenkins

Founder, The Live By Example Speaker

"Everything Begins and Ends with Communication."



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