

## Unit 3.3 Self-Talk, Part 1

### OVERVIEW

Your self-talk is the conversation that you carry on with yourself all of the time. It's what you tell yourself, either consciously or subconsciously. It can be specific to a situation—"I did a great job today" or "I really blew that one." Or it can be a more general evaluation of your character, such as "I'm a good father" or "I'm a good boss."

Self-talk is a powerful force in our mental lives, in part because what we say to ourselves doesn't just evaporate into thin air. Each statement is recorded into the neurons of our brains. Despite the fact that self-talk takes place completely within the confines of our minds, our brains record it as if it had happened in fact. And even if that self-talk is negative, destructive, or completely invalid, it doesn't matter. The brain is a literal mechanism. It doesn't argue. It doesn't counsel or correct. It just records.

In other words, your self-talk helps to frame your perception of reality. It becomes the filter through which you perceive and interpret events around you. Negative self-talk causes you to function less effectively, largely because it can cause you to misperceive, misinterpret, or overreact. Remember: garbage in, garbage out.

On the other hand, positive self-talk can improve the way you respond to situations. By helping you to form a better self-concept, self-talk can create a more positive benchmark that your creative subconscious can use to drive you to greater accomplishment and success.

### UNIT QUESTIONS / EXERCISES

1. Think about a recent situation in which you achieved more than you expected you would. How did you feel afterward? What kind of subtle statements did you tell yourself? Share your answers with your coach and/or the group.

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2. Now, think of a recent situation in which you performed less well than you would have liked. How did you feel afterward? What kind of subtle statements did you find entering your mind? Discuss your answers with your coach and/or the group.

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3. Think about how this applies to your work relationship at John L. Scott. What kind of organizational "self-talk" have you encountered? How does this organizational self-talk affect your organization's self-concept and performance levels? Discuss your answers with the group.

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