

the other end of most of our 4-year curriculums, for every one young man we can hand a 4-year degree, there are two companies standing there bidding for his services.

Fifty percent mortality on the intake--we meet half the demand for our product on the outgo. I get worried about this. If the reports I have read that come back from Moscow have any accuracy to them at all, the Russians are losing fewer than 5 percent of their high-ability crop of 18-year-olds every fall. Persistently, by contrast in America we lose just about 50 percent of our high-ability crop of 18-year-olds. I don't know how long we can stay in the ball game with them, with this unnecessary drain of potential-trained brainpower. I say "unnecessary," because, if we could subject ourselves and our children to even 10 minutes of uncomfortably tough listening once a week for 12 years, we would not have the present great washout at the university-freshman level.

Bad listening habit No. 9 is letting emotion-laden words get between us and the speaker. This is a curious business, too. But it is a fact that a single word may have such an emotional load to it that it will cause some listener to tune the speaker right out.

I ran into this accidentally several years ago. I was giving a talk to a large group of freshman about the nature of speech. I was saying something like this to the group: "You know, man was never born to be a speaking animal in the first place. We have 26 organs in the midline of our bodies that we use to talk with, and every one was put inside us for a more primitive, biological purpose--such as breathing, chewing, swallowing, and the like. Probably by plain accident some old Stone Age man made a grunt of some kind, was pleased with his product, and with it initiated, through a long period of evolution, a code of symbols that we eventually came to call speech."

I saw some frozen looks out front. I happened to have a long, objective test over that particular lecture content. When I scored the papers, I found that a whole bunch of my freshmen had missed a whole cluster of items right after the one that dealt with the evolutionary character of speech. Curious, I had interviews with them, trying to find out why. To my astonishment, I discovered that 40 percent of my freshmen had been taken aside by their parents and had been warned before being allowed to enroll in our good university down there, that they were going to run into a lot