

## **Are you hearing what you WANT to hear or what you NEED to hear?**

Abraham Lincoln was arguably one of the greatest leaders in US history. In her book, *Team of Rivals*, Doris Kearns Goodwin highlights a key aspect of Lincoln's genius: he intentionally assembled a team of advisors who often disagreed with him—a true "team of rivals."

By contrast, consider Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson. Have you ever heard of him? Johnson became president after Lincoln's assassination and is consistently ranked as one of the worst presidents in US history. Why? As Brenda Wineapple notes in *The Impeachers*, "Johnson listened only to news that justified what he already thought."

This stark comparison raises important questions:

1. Who are you listening to?
2. What are you willing to hear?
3. When you find yourself hearing only what you want to hear, can you recognize it?

Challenge yourself to seek out and truly listen to those who will tell you what you don't want to hear. It might just be the key to better leadership and personal growth.

Bill Gorman