

Communication Skills



Module 4: Lecture 1

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Listening Skills

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Misconceptions About Listening

- *Only intelligent people can listen.*
- **Fact:** Active listening is a cultivated behavior.
- *Speaking is a more important than listening.*
- **Fact:** Both are equally important in effective communication.
- *Speaking consumes energy, not listening.*
- **Fact:** Active listeners spend as much energy as a speaker/jogger.
- *Listening is an unconscious process.*
- **Fact:** Listening is an active mental process; hearing is an involuntary act.
- *Speakers can make their audience listen to them 100 per cent.*
- **Fact:** Speakers cannot make their audience really listen.



Listening is different from

Hearing!





Hearing is physical



Reception of sound waves by ear



Effective Listening

- To be an Effective Listener, one has to be **completely involved** in the communication process,
- and fully (physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically) present.





Effective Listening

- Should be **attentive** and
- **Actively responsive**
- Should be conscious of and in complete control of **preoccupations**,
and
distractions



For Effective Listening
The Mind should be open...

*"The mind is like a parachute—
it functions only when
it is open!"*



Robert Schuler

Types of Listeners

- Active Listeners
- Passive Listeners
- Non-Listeners
- Evaluative Listeners

Types of Listeners

● **Active Listeners**

Listen to not only THE MESSAGE but also THE WAY it has been communicated. [WHAT + HOW]

- Sensitive to the other person's feelings and moods, making the other cared for, which is important for effective communication



Types of Listeners

- Passive Listener
- Pays attention to partial message
- Insensitive to nuances and inner meanings
- Ends in incomplete communication



Non-Listener



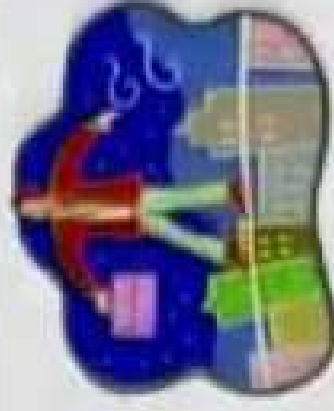
Does not listen at all.
Pretends to follow the speaker.
Preoccupied with something else
Suffers from rigidity of thinking
and egotism
Utterly insensitive and uncaring
Incapable of understanding others

Marginal listener

- Pays superficial attention
- Captures the sounds, but fails to grasp its sense
- Impatient to listen to the main ideas
- Interested in the bottom line



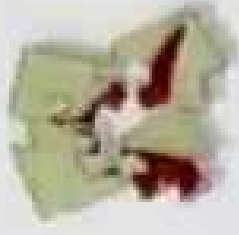
Marginal Listener



- Risky to communicate with marginal listeners as—
- They contribute misunderstandings and cause problems
- Mislead the speaker with the false impression that they are listened to.



Evaluative Listener



- Literally evaluates the verbal content on the basis of words not paralinguistic cues
- Uses logic to get the content of the message
- Detached emotionally from the content

Evaluative Listener

- Most people are evaluative listeners
- They believe that they fully well understand the speakers
- But the speakers are unsure



What type of listener
should you be?

**All Effective
Communicators
Are**

Active Listeners

Active Listener



- Serious about the whole process of communication
- Concentrates to comprehend the speaker's stance, perspective, point of view
- Most understandable and intense level
- Demands maximum energy and could be tiring as it needs complete attention to the subject matter

Barriers to Active Listening

- Inadequate language base
- Partial Listening
- Disinterestedness
- Pre-judging the Speaker/the Speech
- Negativity towards the Speaker
- Diffidence
- Over-enthusiasm/Intolerance
- Deep-rooted beliefs

Barriers to Active Listening

- **Inadequate language Base**
- Insufficient technical vocabulary
- Combined with fear or shyness to seek clarifications



Barriers to Active Listening

- **Partial Listening**

- **D**istracted with objects on the computer when talking over the phone
- Reading something during a conversation



Barriers to Active Listening

Disinterestedness

- Lack of interest in the subject
- Paying attention to other subjects
- Students recall cricket score better than data shown on an educational video



Prejudging the Speaker/the Speech

- Forming conclusion about the speech just by looking at the speaker's dress, appearance, posture, etc
- Gender & colour preferences
- Status and Stereotypes affecting critical thinking

Barriers to Active Listening

Negativity towards the Speaker

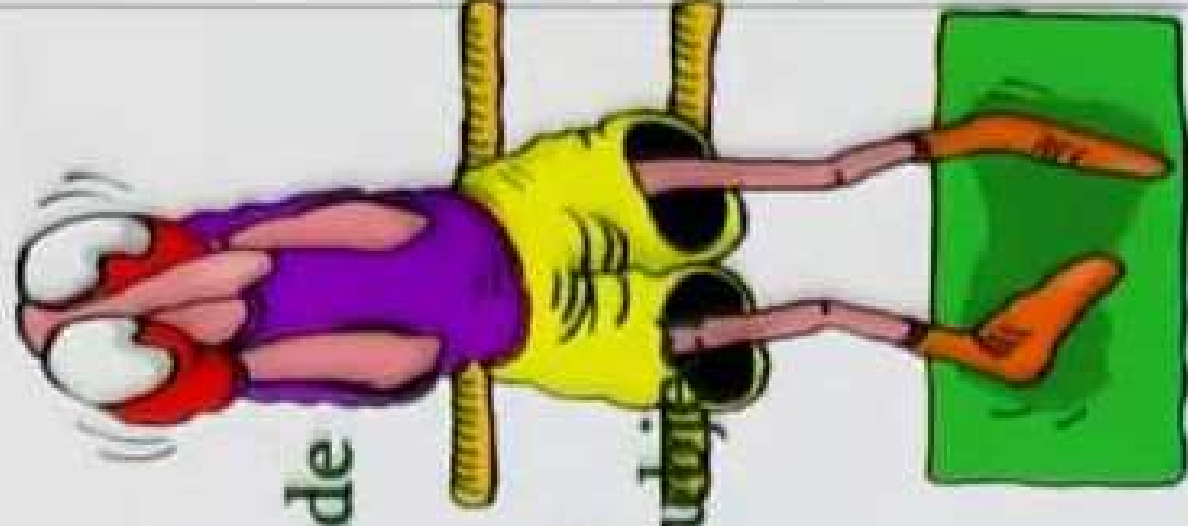
- Underestimating the speaker's capabilities
- Showing animosity
- Disapproving the speaker's view points
- Ending up in constructing distorted message
- Arises out of psychological barriers



Barriers to Active Listening

Diffidence

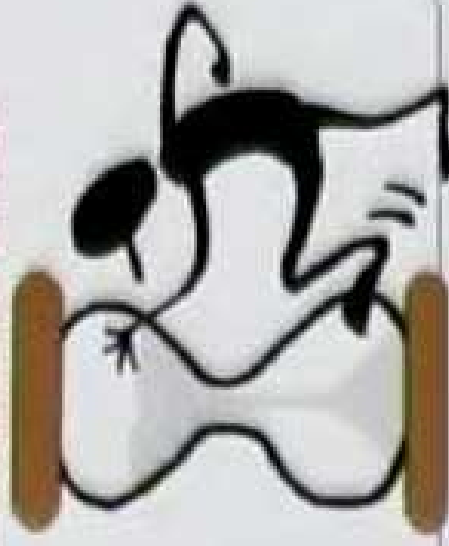
- Suffers from a defeatist attitude
- Undermines self-capabilities
for fully understanding the subject
- Students and conference
participants suffer from this



Barriers to Active Listening

Over-enthusiasm / Intolerance

- Overenthusiastic to supply gaps in the speaker's ideas
- Intolerant to wait till the end of the speech
- Advances questions and interferes quickly
- Anxious to wind up the communication process



Active Listening Techniques



Take Notes

It helps in concentrating

It keeps one alert

Required skill for telephone conversation

Listening as Management

Unlike hearing that is at entertainment level,

Listening is at management level: involving planning, decision-making, etc

Active Listening Techniques

- **Be supportive to the speaker**
Encourage the speaker by affirmative nods, and interested facial expressions
- **Do not interrupt the speaker**
It not only reveals your poor listening skills but also showcases your rude, uncultured self

Active Listening Techniques

- **Do not change the topic**
- **Do not seek self-attention**
- **Do not dismiss the topic before listening to it fully**
- **Avoid multitasking**



Active Listening Techniques



Ask Questions

To make sure what the speaker is saying;
You also connect to the speaker

Ask Open Questions

DON'T ask YES or NO questions
E.g: Don't Ask, "Has this been going on for ten years?"

Ask, "How long has this been going on" – you facilitate the speaker elaborate on the topic.

Active Listening Techniques

Keep Summarizing



Keep summarizing at transition points

You can show that you are following the speaker and understanding her argument

E.g: “So you are exploited by your previous boss, but you are still loyal to him as he gave you the first job ...”

Active Listening Techniques



Repeat

Repeating back a word or phrase can encourage people to go on. It shows that you are reflecting. If someone says "So it's been a really different experience," you can keep the conversation simply by repeating "different experience..."

Seek Clarification

Request the speaker to say more on the point. Admit that it's a complex area for you to understand

It may also help the speaker to address the issue from a different point of view and clarify to himself

Active Listening Techniques



Focus on Message

Avoid focusing on any irregularities

Show that you are interested in the subject

Concentrate on the meaning and intent

Show care and empathy

Instead of laughing at the speaker for any mistakes, put yourself in the shoes of the speaker and show consideration

Offer help if necessary

Avoid positive bias/influence

Evaluate the Message:

"Our leader had an unhappy Childhood and little formal education. His father bitterly opposed his ambition to become an artist. Through self-education, he became the author of a book that became a national best seller. Obstacles do not discourage him. When others say, "It's impossible," he hurdles each barrier as it comes. He has built an active youth movement of selected young people. He is known throughout the world for his dynamic speeches. His closest associates say of him, "He accomplishes incredible deeds out of the passion of his will in order to create the kind of government he believes in."

(Quoted in Diana Bismert, p. 28)

The famous personality is . . .

Adolf Hitler!



Effective Listening

Pay complete attention.

Don't think ahead as to what you are going to say next.

Don't rehearse your own comments while the other is speaking.

Don't interrupt. Remain silent while the other person speaks.



Effective Listening

Listen for feelings underneath words—and to the nuances in language.

Read the body language.

**Keep an open mind—
don't judge immediately.**

**Encourage the speaker to continue—clarify what is
being said, if necessary.**

Benefits of effective listening

- Removes barriers between interpersonal communication
- Minimizes miscommunication and wrong transactions
- Saves time by efficient handling of business
- Builds up trust and generates mutual respect

Benefits of effective listening

- Effectively used to calm down, comfort and soothe people
- Develops confidence and self-esteem
- Facilitates productivity and accuracy
- Helps in therapeutic relations
- Keeps intact certain religious practices

Benefits of effective listening

- Makes you much demanded in personal and professional situations
- Complete professional tasks efficiently (e.g., 10 boxing gloves; “burn” the document)
- Gives job satisfaction