Look at me when I’m talking to you!

Getting ahead by improving your listening skills

Jean Marie Heilig
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“The most basic of human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.”

- Ralph Nichols
OUTCOMES

- Evaluate your own listening skills
- Identify the characteristics of a poor listener
- Learn behaviors that support listening
- Practice effective listening skills by asking pertinent questions
There is a difference between listening and hearing, just as there is a difference between seeing and knowing.

Meg Cabot
LISTENING

“The learned process of receiving, interpreting, recalling, evaluating and responding to verbal and nonverbal messages.”

HEARING

“The faculty of perceiving sounds”
**WHAT’S IN IT FOR ME?**

Finding out what someone wants so that you can satisfy their needs.

Understanding someone’s pov, attitude, feelings or concerns.

Receiving information to form an opinion or reach a decision.
Maximizing your learning during training sessions.

Getting Feedback about your own performance so that you can correct problems.
THE NUMBERS

- 70% of our waking moments are spent in communication
  - Writing 9%
  - Reading 16%
  - Talking 30%
  - Listening 45%

- We only remember 20% to 50% of what we hear.
- Within 48 hours we only retain 25% of what we’ve heard.
THE NUMBERS

- People find it hard to concentrate fully for more than 15-20 minutes without a break.
- We talk at about 150 words per minute, but listen at nearly 4x that rate and can think at rates up to 1,000 words per minute.
How Good Are Your Listening Skills?
## Scoring

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How Good Are Your Listening Skills?

How Did You Score?

Time to Share...
(anonymously of course!)
IRRITATING LISTENING HABITS

- Interrupting
- Not looking at speaker
- Rushing the speaker
- Showing interest in something other than the conversation
IRRITATING LISTENING HABITS

- Finishing the speaker’s thoughts
- Not responding to the speaker’s requests
- Topping the speaker’s story
- Forgetting what was talked about previously
Barriers to Listening

- Filtering
- Making Assumptions
- Giving Unsolicited Advice
- Offering Hasty Reassurance
- Being Judgmental or Critical
- Being Defensive or Arguing
- Failing to Understand Cultural Differences
Let’s Discuss.....

What specific behaviors or actions have you been using to assure a speaker that you are paying rapt attention to them?
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Remove Distractions
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Eye Contact
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Positive Body Language
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Vocal Affirmations

YES!
YEAH
I SEE
Mmm-hmm
UH-HUH
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Avoid Talking
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Don’t Interrupt
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Don’t formulate a response before the person has finished speaking.
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Paraphrasing
GOOD LISTENING SKILLS

Embrace Pauses
Best Listening Skill

Asking a question is the best way to indicate that you are truly listening.
Why Use Questions?

- They may force you to actually listen!
- Speaker will perceive you as being empathetic.
  - “demonstrating an active concern for people and their needs”
- Has the power to show that you are able to be consensual.
  - “Valuing the ideas and opinions of others and collecting their input as part of your decision-making process.”
Questions

Ask questions that are:

- Open-ended
- Begin with the word “What”
- Vertical
Open-Ended Questions

YES  NO
Open-Ended Questions

Use open-ended questions when:

- You want to know what someone is thinking and feeling
- You want to show someone that you value their ideas and you value them
- You want someone to know you are interested in what they have to say
LET'S PRACTICE!

Closed to Open

Do you get along well with your boss?

Do you enjoy your car?

Do you like the rain?

Are you happy?
“What” Questions

Kiss of Death

Why? Questions
“WHAT” Questions

Why to What

Why did you do that?

Why did you make that decision?

Why did you say yes?
VERTICAL QUESTIONS
Let’s Discuss

Ask your partner to tell you about the town they grew up in as a kid. Do your best to ask as many vertical questions as you can about the topic before allowing the conversation to move to a conclusion.
GOOD LISTENERS ARE LIKE TRAMPOLINES
HOMEWORK!

Observe a conversation between two people who are doing more than exchanging small talk. What do you notice?