

LISTENING

Listening Defined: To hear something with thoughtful attention, give consideration.

Session Objective:

The overall objective of this session is to enhance your listening ability. This session looks at the three styles of listening and outlines specific tools to help you develop a more active style of listening. It outlines and monitors respectful and disrespectful signals, working to improve timing of responses and well as quality of responses; it aims to integrate more verbal and nonverbal responses during the process of receiving and improves upon current skills for a more focused, interactive style of listening.

Skill Development:

Listening is a skill. It means paying attention not only to the story, but how it is told, the use of language and voice and how the other person uses his or her body. The skill development will focus on integrating more verbal and nonverbal responses during the process of receiving, to improve focus and ability to consider, improve timing of responses as well as improve the quality of response.

Listening Types: Active, Passive & Competitive

Competitive Listening:

State of being: “Me” state of being, waiting to speak

Primary traits: Fast, intelligent, impatient

Receiving: Distracted focus (inconsistent eye contact, looking at phone etc.)
Distracted body language (tap anything impatiently, click pen, feet/finger tapping etc.)
Non-responsive face
Rapid and reiterative audible sounds of agreement (“yup”, “uh-huh”, “right”, “got it” etc.)

Responding: No validation (ignoring/not incorporating speakers points)
Straight to own perspective (make entirely different point, change subject)
Assert own intelligence (push own agenda/views/perspective)

Timing: Fast/Impatient
Finish their sentences, cut them off, interrupts, jump to conclusions, talks over speaker

Passive Listening:

State of being: “Them” state of being, waiting for permission to speak

Primary traits: Slow, formal, detached, inactive

Receiving: Detached Focus (eyes glaze)
Inactive body language (no movement)
Non-responsive face
Little to no sounds of agreement

Responding: Defaults to agreeing (path of least resistance, non confrontational, no agenda of own)
Or
Offers own perspective ineffectually (ideas as questions, negates first then states point)
Status conscious / status deferential

Timing: Slow (finish/beat/beat/respond)
Formal (waiting for permission to speak, would never interrupt)

Active Listening:

State of being: “Us” state of being, responsive

Primary traits: Responsive, interested, interactive

Receiving: Focused (present, brain focus AND body focus, consistent eye contact)
Physical focus (body quiet, moved with intentionality)
Responsive face (micro expressions)
Audible sounds of agreement/interest: (“sure”, “right”, “ok”, um-hm” etc.)
Responsive questions, comments, recap, give examples of what they are saying

Responding: Validate/acknowledge speaker’s perspective (tell them why it is interesting)
Contextualize your agenda in relation to theirs (find the overlap, emphasize commonality, teach perspective)
Emphasize commonality & building on their perspective (batting for same team)

Timing: Responsive/Real time
Interject and add to their perspective

Training Trajectory

Listening affects everything in communication. It affects the quality of interaction and determines the outcome. Your listening ability also affects your ability as a speaker. How the information goes in directly informs how the information comes out (of you). The better listener you become the more impactful a speaker you will be.