

## Listening Skills

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Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. Listening is the key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood. As a result communication breaks down and the sender of the message can easily become frustrated or irritated.



### What Makes a Good Listener?

Good listeners actively endeavour to understand what others are really trying to say, regardless of how unclear the messages might be. Listening involves not only the effort to decode verbal messages, but also to interpret nonverbal cues such as tone of voice, facial expressions, and physical posture.

Effective listeners make sure to let others know that they have been heard, and encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings fully.

### What Makes a Bad Listener

Interrupting the person you're speaking with, and talking before they have had a chance to finish what they are saying indicates that your listening skills may need polishing up. Responding with a statement that doesn't answer the question you've been asked will reflect poorly on your listening skills

## Types of Listening

### Discriminative Listening

When the listener distinguishes between the verbal and the nonverbal message. For instance, your friend may tell you that they are feeling good, but the frown on their face and their sluggish posture may tell you otherwise. This type of listening can be used for all types of public speeches.

## Comprehensive Listening

Listening to understand. Many situations can require us to listen for knowledge. For instance, if your boss at work tells you how to complete a specific task you would need to utilize this type of listening if you will be able to understand and complete the task as he instructed. Most of the public speeches will require a listener to utilize this type of listening and it is mostly used when listening to an Informative speech.



## Appreciative Listening

The process of listening to appreciate what the speaker is talking about. This type is often used when listening to people who we enjoy spending time with. It is also widely used when listening to many forms of entertainment, music, television, stage shows. Thus, listeners will always use appreciative listening when listening to entertainment speeches. This type is also used when listening to informative speeches and persuasive speeches, especially when the topic is something that the listener is highly interested in.

## Empathetic Listening

An ability to listen to others and feel for the other person. This requires an ability to feel empathetic for another person's feelings and needs, requiring a sense of compassion. When a loved one tells you their feelings about the death of a family member you will probably be able to listen empathetically. A Eulogy is a perfect example of a Special Occasion speech in which listeners will listen empathetically.

## Critical Listening

The process of listening to understand in order to make evaluations and judgements about the content of the message. Because this is the most complicated form and requires a high degree of skill to develop, the next section will go into greater detail about Listening Critically.

## Active listening

Active listening is a communication technique used in counselling, training, and conflict resolution. It requires that the listener fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said.



## Components of Active Listening

There are three primary aspects of active listening:

1. *Comprehending* – In the comprehension stage of listening, the listener actively analyzes and listens to what the speaker is saying without distraction or thoughts about other topics.
2. *Retaining* – Retaining requires the listener to remember what the speaker has said so that the speaker's full message can be conveyed. Some people may opt to take notes or use memory tricks when practicing active listening.
3. *Responding* – Responding is the act of providing both verbal and nonverbal feedback to the speaker that indicates the listener is both hearing and understanding what the speaker has said.



## 10 Steps to Effective Listening

1. **Face the speaker and maintain eye contact.**
2. **Be attentive, but relaxed.**
3. **Keep an open mind.**
4. **Listen to the words and try to picture what the speaker is saying.**
5. **Don't interrupt and don't impose your "solutions."**
6. **Wait for the speaker to pause to ask clarifying questions.**
7. **Ask questions only to ensure understanding.**
8. **Try to feel what the speaker is feeling.**
9. **Give the speaker regular feedback.**
10. **Pay attention to what *isn't* said – to nonverbal cues.**



## How to listen: Some tips

1. Hearing is not listening. Hearing doesn't make communication: listening does.
2. Listening must take place at two levels. Level of words and that of feelings. We are constantly speaking the language of feelings but rarely listening at that level. If you don't understand how a person feels you haven't understood them



3. You can't listen to another unless you are listening to yourself. If you can't hear your own feelings, you will never hear this. Without an awareness of your own feelings, you will be sending signals to them that you yourself don't perceive. You can't communicate with another if your own communication system has broken down.
4. Argumentation is the end of listening
5. Just avoid interrupting would be a great leap forward for many
6. No man is an island. People need people, and people need listening
7. The first duty of love is to listen. To listen is to understand. To understand is to listen.

### How to answer the telephone

#### DO

1. Identify your organization and yourself

"CMFRI. Miss Nithya speaking"

"CMFRI, Nithya'

2. be tactful

"May I tell him who is calling, please?"

"Do you wish him to call you when the meeting is over?"

3. be helpful

"Do you wish to leave any message"?

"Mr. Mathew is out just now. Can I give you Ms. Malavika?"

4. Stop talking when you are not saying anything.

#### DON'T

1. Shout or get too close to the receiver

2. Say "Hello". This can cause a chain reaction

3. Talk to anyone else until you have finished your conversation with the caller

4. Forget to say "Thank You". If it's called for.

