

Listening on the job

Definition:

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process.

Levels of Listening

1. Ignoring

The lowest level of listening is called ignoring – not listening at all. If you are distracted by anything while talking to a user, they can get the impression that you are ignoring them. For example, while the user is speaking, you start a conversation with another. You are ignoring your user.

2. Pretend Listening

Pretend listening is most easily explained in the face-to-face conversation. You're talking to the other person and look in their eyes. On the phone, it happens when you say things like "I see" and "OK," etc.

3. Selective Listening

During selective listening, we pay attention to the speaker as long as they are talking about things we like or agree with. If they move on to other things we slip down to pretend listening or ignore them altogether.

4. Attentive Listening

Attentive listening occurs when we carefully listen to the other person, but while they are speaking we are deciding whether we agree or disagree, determining whether they are right or wrong. Instead of paying close attention to the other person, we're formulating our response to what he or she is saying.

5. Empathic Listening

The fifth level of listening is Empathic listening, also known as empathetic listening is the top level of listening. To be successful in providing IT support to end users, you must teach yourself to treat every call as though this is the first

time you've ever heard this problem, even though you may have heard it many times before. Discipline yourself to see it through the eyes of the user. This is called empathic listening. Empathic listening is the highest level of listening, and the hardest to accomplish.

Types of Listening

Discriminative Listening

This is the most basic type of listening. It involves identifying the difference between various sounds. It also enables one to differentiate between familiar and unfamiliar language. The detail of accent and pronunciation typical of a language can be identified by this kind of listening.

Comprehension Listening

This type of listening involves something more than just differentiating between various sounds. It involves attaching meaning to what is being listened to, that is the message is comprehended. It may also include comprehending the non-verbal messages being conveyed intentionally or unintentionally by the speaker.

Evaluative Listening

This is also called critical listening. This involves not only comprehending the message but also evaluating and analyzing the message being received. It involves judging the acceptability of what is said depending on how logical one finds it to be.

Attentive Listening

It involves paying attention to the words that are being spoken rather than understanding the head and the heart of the person speaking. It involves making a conscious effort to listen attentively and decode the message. The concentration is on the verbal part of the message rather than the non-verbal aspect.

Pretence Listening

This involves more hearing than listening. It means pretending through facial expressions that one is listening to the communicated message when actually one is not.

Selective Listening

Listening is done only partly or selectively. It involves selecting the desired part of the message and ignoring the undesired part of the message. The attention of the listener is not focused.

Intuitive Listening

It is a higher form of listening. It means listening through the intuitive mind by silencing the other forms of internal dialogues going on simultaneously.

Barriers in listening

1) Distractions

As you're distracted, you're also likely to miss important points or information that you might need in the future. When you're having a conversation with someone, it's best to keep these distractions away and focus on the person in front of you.

2) Noise

The issue of background noise is especially common during telephone conversations. For example, many people think they can tackle important conversations while they're commuting. In most cases, however, the noise levels are too high for effective communication, not to mention the fact that it can cause strain to the person on the other end as well. In situations like this, it's always better to either defer the conversation or move it somewhere quieter.

3) Interruptions

People are so eager to be heard that sometimes they interrupt conversations to state their own opinion. However, not only is it considered rude, but it's also one of the biggest barriers to effective listening. To avoid making this mistake, try to wait until the other person has finished talking before saying your own ideas out loud.

4) Prejudice

When you live and work in a multicultural environment, it's vital to leave all your prejudices (narrow-mindedness) behind when you're communicating with others. For example, if you assume a person is unintelligent (or even less intelligent than you) you're blinding yourself. You need to listen everyone what they have to say.

5) Lack of interest

Often, we find ourselves in a conversation that simply can't hold our interest. In such cases, we'll focus on something else – which, unfortunately, can be a barrier to listening. Of course, it's not really a good idea to force your attention on a topic which is boring. If the discussion isn't important, turn the conversation to a different direction. If it is important, try to focus on the relevant points and note them down.

Guidance for Effective Listening

Effective listening is a skill that enhances relationships and is particularly important in the role of helping others. This ability allows us to effectively respond to people when they need guidance, advice, or to discuss repentance, confession, relationship issues, etc. The following are some practical suggestions for effective listening below.

- 1. Prepare to listen.**
- 2. Encourage further sharing.**
- 3. Check your listening attitudes.**
- 4. Be aware of both content and delivery.**
- 5. Be aware of your own emotions and reactions while listening.**
- 6. Resist distractions.**
- 7. Listen to themes.**
- 8. Don't get carried away by your own curiosity.**
- 9. As you listen, avoid "preaching," lecturing, or arguing.**
- 10. Use well-placed questions to draw out information.**

Listening Computerization and Note –Taking

Effective note-taking involves extracting and recording the important ideas covered in lecture in a way that will help you to recall them. Good notes provide a valuable means for review and learning and can increase the probability of doing well on an exam.

Suggestions to Improve Note Taking

- 1. Think before writing.** Relate what is being said to what you already know or have reviewed. Use your own interests/needs as well as information common to the course to guide your thoughts.

2. **Preparing** for class is an aid in helping you to become aware of the major concepts and in deciding what to record.
3. **Be selective.** Listen to everything, but do not try to write it all down. Search for the main ideas and sort out the important sub points and details. Notes should be brief, legible and consistent.
4. **Take accurate notes.** Use our own words, but don't waste time thinking of synonyms. Lecturer's terms may be simplified later. Use brackets to separate your own ideas from those of the lecturer.
5. **Abbreviate words** whenever possible, but be consistent.
6. Don't worry about missing a point. Leave spaces and fill what you missed later. Also, leave spaces for expanding and clarifying notes.
7. Record all important facts: dates, names, places, formulas. Copy diagrams and illustrations which will clarify your notes.
8. Draw a **single line through mistakes**, rather than erase or black out completely. This saves time and energy, and you may find later that the mistakes may have been important to record after all.
9. **Integrate** lecture notes with text material. This is helpful for clarification and retention of material. If text material is repeated in the lecture, you can make a notation for later referral to the text. Be sure to note supplementary examples or elaborations.
10. **Review notes** after class. Reread and edit your notes as soon as possible while the information is still fresh in your mind, adding and clarifying in order to increase your understanding.