

# Just Listen Summary

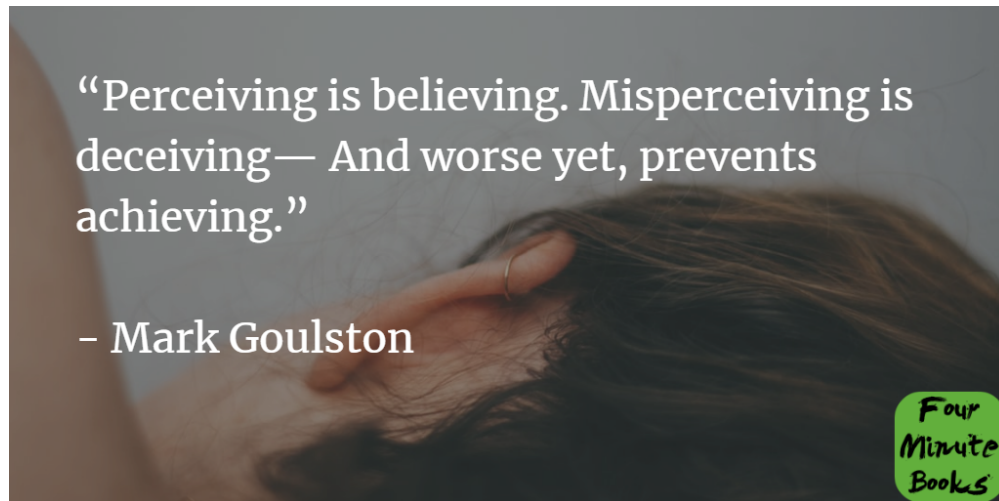
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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Just Listen teaches how to get your message across to anyone by using proven listening and persuasion techniques.*

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



Have you ever talked to someone who only talks about themselves? They'll tell you all about their last vacation or their kids. Yet they don't care to ask you about your life. Isn't it kind of exhausting? It's hard to talk to people like this because a good conversation requires reciprocation. As humans, we want to be heard and understood, and we need to give people that in return by listening to them.

What if we need to get a message across to someone else? How do we get them to listen to us? We often have situations where we need to get through to people; whether it's a disgruntled employee, an insecure spouse, or an unhappy client. To convince people to listen to you, you simply need to listen to them first.

If you want to learn how to get people invested in what you have to say and reach those who seem unreachable, *Just Listen: Discover the Secret to Getting Through to Absolutely Anyone* is the book for you. Author Mark Goulston is a psychiatrist and business coach that consults major organizations. Using the most up-to-date research on listening and persuasion techniques, he will help you get your message across to just about anyone by learning to listen better.

Here are the 3 biggest lessons I've learned from this book:

1. Listening first will help you overcome resistance and start moving forward.
2. Make sure people are using the rational part of the brain when you have a conversation with them.
3. Vulnerability will make people want to listen and connect with you.

Let's lend a listening ear to what this book has to teach!

## Lesson 1: If you want to make progress with someone, listen first.

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Have you ever been in a situation where you're stressed out about something, and when you tell someone how you're feeling, they immediately try to come up with solutions for you? The truth is, whenever we feel big emotions, we don't want advice. We just want to share what's happening and have someone listen to and *feel* with us.

When we listen to others first, we give them ample chance to talk about their concerns and how they feel. **Listening first gives others the space they need to start thinking it through and disputing irrational feelings if necessary.** Listening before you speak is also habit 5 of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

To illustrate this lesson, Goulston gives an example of a man who has a gun to his head and is ready to take his own life. When the police and negotiations team arrive, they try to calm him down by pointing out there are other options but aren't getting through to him.

Another officer approaches and listens to the man. He says something to the effect of "I'll bet you feel this is the only way out." The man says yes, and the officer listens to his feelings. After a little while, the man starts to calm down and consider other options than ending his own life.

## Lesson 2: To listen and be receptive we need the rational part of our brain must be active.

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When it comes to thinking about the world around us, we have three main layers of thinking. The first layer is our instinctual, reptilian brain. It is responsible for fight-or-flight and is quick to react, even before analyzing. The second layer is the mammalian layer and is a bit more advanced than the reptilian. This part runs on emotions. When we feel big feelings of anger, love, or sadness, they come from the mammalian part. The last and most evolved part is our rational layer. It collects evidence, analyzes, and arrives at logical conclusions based on the data from the other layers.

The important lesson from these layers is that we need to make sure that the person we are talking to is using their rational layer. When we feel threatened, the immediate reaction is to use our emotional brain or to use the reptilian fight-or-flight. But if we can express these feelings out loud, we allow ourselves to cool down and figure out a solution.

On the flip-side, when we are communicating with others, we need to let them work through their feelings before those emotions become a problem. **Once we listen and address how they feel, others will feel understood and can listen with their rational part of their brain to what we have to say.**

## Lesson 3: If we're vulnerable, others will want to listen to us.

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We learn from Goulston that when all seems lost, "bare your neck." When you don't feel like you are getting anywhere and start to feel anarv. trv instead to reach inside and show your vulnerable side.

Let's admit it: it's hard to be vulnerable. But vulnerability is an invaluable tool for communication. When we show emotions of sadness or fear, it gives people the chance to connect with us. Chances are, they have felt the way you're feeling. **And when you share your vulnerable feelings, others will feel for you and want to help.**

The less we are vulnerable with people, the less likely they are to want to listen to us. Vulnerability allows for connection. And furthermore, when we are vulnerable, people are more likely to be open and honest with us. When we allow people to be vulnerable with us in turn, both conversational partners can work to find out what's behind each other's emotions.

## Just Listen Review

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Though a lot of the listening techniques in *Just Listen* probably aren't anything new to anyone who has read books on communication, there is plenty to learn here. Goulston combines psychiatry and research to give readers excellent tips they can use to get through to people in everyday life. From learning how to make great first impressions to convincing an angry person to think rationally again, there are many lessons in how to improve the way you listen and talk to others.

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## Who would I recommend the Just Listen summary to?

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The 44-year-old mother who has a hard time getting through to her teenage daughter, the 32-year-old salesman who wants more success, and anyone who wants to improve their persuasion skills.