

# **LISTENING AS A COMMUNICATION SKILL**

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# RECAP

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- ✖ Communication is a Series of Experiences of Hearing, Seeing, Smell, Touch, & Taste
- ✖ Communication is about more than just exchanging information
- ✖ It's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information
- ✖ It's not only how you convey a message so that it is received and understood by someone in exactly the way you intended, it's also how you listen to gain the full meaning of what's being said and to make the other person feel heard and understood.

# POSITIVE COMMUNICATION

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- ✖ Tells the recipient what can be done
- ✖ Suggests alternatives and choices available to the recipient
- ✖ Sounds helpful and encouraging rather than bureaucratic
- ✖ Stresses positive actions and positive consequences that can be anticipated



# NEGATIVE COMMUNICATION

- ✖ Tells the recipient what cannot be done
- ✖ Has a subtle tone of blame
- ✖ Includes words like can't, won't, unable to, that tell the recipient what the sending agency cannot do
- ✖ Does not stress positive actions that would be appropriate, or positive consequences

# FAST FACTS

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- ✖ We listen at 125-250 wpm
- ✖ We think at 1000-3000 wpm
- ✖ 75% of the time we are distracted, preoccupied or forgetful
- ✖ 20% of the time, we remember what we hear
- ✖ More than 35% of businesses think listening is a top skill for success
- ✖ Less than 2% of people have had formal education with listening

# LISTENING

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- ✗ *listening is the interpretative action taken by an individual in order to understand and potentially make meaning out of the sound waves*
- ✗ **Listening** is the conscious processing of the auditory stimuli that have been perceived through hearing



# STAGES OF LISTENING

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- ✖ Listening can be understood on three levels:
  - Alerting
    - At the alerting level one merely picks up on certain environmental sound cues
  - Deciphering
    - The second level, is to listening what digestion is to eating
  - Understanding
    - How the sound is produced and how the sound affects the listener

# LISTENING VS HEARING

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## ✕ Hearing

- + Physical process;
- + natural; passive

## ✕ Listening

- + Physical & mental process;
- + active; learned process; a skill
- + listening is a psychological act
- + Listening is hard! You must choose to participate in the process of listening



# BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- ✗ Physiological Barriers
- ✗ Environmental barriers
- ✗ Attitudinal barriers and false assumptions
- ✗ Socio cultural differences
- ✗ Lack of training

# LISTEN WITH A PURPOSE

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- ✖ Purpose can be to gain information
- ✖ Obtain directions
- ✖ Understand others
- ✖ Solve problems
- ✖ Share interest
- ✖ See how another person feels
- ✖ Show support

# ACTIVE LISTENING

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- ✗ Use Non-verbal Communication
- ✗ Smile
- ✗ Gestures
- ✗ Eye contact
- ✗ Your posture



# GIVE FEEDBACK

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- ✖ Remember that what someone says and what we hear can be amazingly different
- ✖ Repeat back or summarize to ensure that you understand
- ✖ Restate what you think you heard and ask, "Have I understood you correctly?"

# SHOW THE SPEAKER YOU ARE LISTENING

- ✗ Eye contact
- ✗ Physical attention
- ✗ Do not change topic
- ✗ Confirm understanding
- ✗ Ask questions to clarify issues
- ✗ Match the speaker body gestures

# 4 STEPS OF ACTIVE LISTENING

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- ✕ Listen
- ✕ Question
- ✕ Reflect-Paraphrase
- ✕ Agree



# GUIDELINES FOR EFFCETIVE LISTENING

- ✗ Be prepared to listen
- ✗ Be interested
- ✗ Keep an open mind
- ✗ Listen for the main ideas
- ✗ Listen critically
- ✗ Resist Distraction

# DONT'S OF LISTENING

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- ✗ Early Dismissal of A Subject As Uninteresting
- ✗ Avoiding Difficult Listening
- ✗ Criticizing Delivery or Physical Appearance
- ✗ Faking Attention
- ✗ Listening Only For Facts
- ✗ Judging
- ✗ Looking bored
- ✗ Yawning during conversation

# LISTENING – ONE TO ONE

- ✗ The Listener keeps looking at the speaker
- ✗ The Listener's body is in an 'open' position
- ✗ The listener is smiling with a pleasant & encouraging expression
- ✗ Listener looks relaxed but alert, neither tense nor slouching
- ✗ Listener utters humming sounds



# EXERCISE - LISTENING

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- ✖ Who are the people it is easiest to listen to?
- ✖ What is it that makes it easier to listen to them?
- ✖ Who are the people you listen to least?
- ✖ What is it about them that makes it difficult to listen to them?

# SUMMARY

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- ✕ *The best thing you can do to improve your communication skills is to learn to really listen—to pay attention and let the other person talk without interrupting.*

# REFERENCES

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