



Day Four: Communicating—Part 4: The Receiver

Time Allowed

30 Minutes

Teaching Format

Patrol presentation

Learning Objectives

As a result of this session, participants will be able to do the following:

1. Understand the importance of effective listening.
2. Understand that good leadership requires effective listening.
3. Understand what empathy is.
4. Understand how empathy is important to effective listening.
5. Understand how effective listening, empathy, and nonverbal cues are important for feedback.

Materials Needed

- Visual aid(s) developed by the presenter
- Computer
- LCD projector and screen
- Appropriate sound system for presentation venue
- 1 small ball for each patrol

Recommended Presenter

Troop guide

Recommended Location

Patrol breakout area

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Note: Guide participants to locate the Participant Notes sheet for this session in the Participant Notebook. Encourage them to be taking note of key words, key points, and their top three takeaways from the session.

Opening Activity: Message Toss (5 min)

Let's do a quick review. We've been talking about effective communication all week. Today we are going to discuss the role of the receiver. Half of all communications are spent listening, and studies have shown that effective listeners are perceived as more intelligent, more effective, and more successful than their peers.

Ask the participants to stand in a close circle. The troop guide picks someone opposite them, across the circle, and says their name out loud along with the word “catch” while tossing the ball to that person. The presenter then asks for the ball back and asks the participants what just happened in terms of the messaging model. Who was the sender? (*The troop guide*) What did the ball represent? (*The message*) Who was the receiver? (*The participant who caught the ball*)

Ask the receiver how they knew the message was coming and how did they receive it? When the Scout starts answering the question, toss the ball at someone who isn’t ready for it so that they drop the ball. Make the point that a sender will normally give the receiver some indication that a message is coming, but sometimes they do not. Not knowing a message is coming—and therefore being unprepared to receive it—is often the cause of ineffective communication.

Ask the participants to provide examples of not being prepared to receive a message. Their answers might include the following:

- Not having your phone with you (or being out of battery) when someone calls
- Being in the middle of a task when you’re asked to do a different or unrelated task
- Already being scheduled for an event when you’re invited to go with your friends
- In a group setting, a friend commits you to do something before ensuring you are willing

Explanation of Effective Listening (5 min)

When you listen effectively, you are more likely to receive the intended message from the sender. There is a difference between “hearing” and “listening.” The presenter is encouraged to share examples, either personal or from staff development, that illustrate the difference between hearing a message and listening to a message.

Hearing is the act of perceiving sounds using one’s ears. Barriers to hearing include noisy rooms and physical impairment. Listening is a conscious act where the listener concentrates on the message so that the brain comprehends the meaning of the signals being sent (words, noises, music, etc.). Barriers to listening include physical distractions, semantics (when a word or phrase means different things to different people), and emotional factors.

When someone is an effective listener, they will receive and understand the message as well as why the message is being sent. If the listener has questions or does not fully understand the message content, effective listeners will ask the sender to repeat the message for clarification.

When you are listening effectively, you are focused on the sender, and you are not distracted. You are thinking about the words the sender is using, processing whether you understand the words, and confirming that you share a common understanding of the words being used.

Effective listening also includes awareness and understanding of the tone and emotion associated with the message.



Why Listening Skills are Important to Leadership (2 min)

Effective listening skills are frequently identified as important to leadership because, if a leader is going to influence others, that leader needs to effectively receive their team's messages and feedback. The leader needs to understand the team's needs, goals, and feelings.

A leader who is an effective listener builds trust with their team. Effective listening conveys that the leader cares about and respects the team members. Leaders who do not seek to effectively listen to their colleagues or members of their team are less able to influence the team and are, therefore, less effective as leaders.

Power of Conversation to Communicate (6 min)

Conversation enables us to connect with one another. Through connection, we can achieve common goals. We can better understand and learn from each other.

Conversations require speaking and listening. Below are tips to improve listening and verbal communication:

1. Don't multitask. Put down your phone and be present.
2. Stop talking. You cannot listen when you are talking.
3. Enter every conversation with the mindset that you have something to learn (humility).
4. Ask open-ended questions for clarification. Think of 5WH (i.e., Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How).
5. Be interested in the other person and their point of view.
6. Pay attention to the sender's body language and tone of voice.

What is Empathy? (6 min)

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the perspectives of another. An expression that captures the meaning of empathy is "putting yourself in someone else's shoes." **Note:** *If neither of these definitions of empathy resonate for either staff or participants, it is important to find a definition that works for the group.*

The presenter should share one or two examples of situations in which they showed empathy as a listener (*receiver*) and the impact it had on the sender. The presenter should encourage the participants to recall a situation in which they demonstrated or could have better demonstrated empathy as a listener. **Note:** *This is a self-reflection question; answers do not need to be shared aloud.*

Oprah Winfrey once said, "Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate to and connect with people for the purpose of inspiring and empowering their lives." Ask participants how they see empathy relating to effective listening and leadership? Their answers might include the following:

- Allows the leader to fully appreciate what matters most to the team
- Helps the leader choose words that connect better with the receivers
- Demonstrates the leader's understanding of the challenges facing the team
- Gives the leader opportunities to build trust with and among the team

Empathy is a skill that can and needs to be developed by effective leaders. Empathy, as a skill, comes more easily for some people than others. Empathy is a skill we can learn and get better at through practice. The presenter should encourage all patrol members to begin practicing empathy during their remaining time at NYLT.

The Language of Body Language (3 min)

In the Message Toss game, what were some of the ways a sender can let the receiver know the ball is on its way? (*Discuss verbal cues—“Hey! Here comes the ball!”—and body language—waving arms, eye contact, motioning toward a receiver.*)

What are some of the ways a receiver can let the sender know they are ready to catch the ball? (*Again, discuss verbal cues—“Here! Throw it here!”—and body language—eye contact, holding hands in a catching position.*)

A person who is speaking should also be aware of their own body language and the effect it may have on the listener. It means paying attention to the body language of the people the speaker is addressing. The speaker needs to understand what signals the listener (or listeners) are sending and how the speaker can adjust their body language to effectively deliver the message.

Conclusion (3 min)

Let's wrap up by talking about effective listening feedback. By rephrasing the information and bouncing it back to the speakers, the listeners are making sure they are hearing what the speakers have to say, and they are letting the speakers know that their messages are getting through.

Ask a volunteer to bounce that last bit of information back to you, and encourage them to put the message into their own words. You can help them get started by offering the phrase, “What I understand you to be saying is this...”.

Remind participants to take a moment to ensure they have noted their top three takeaways in their Participant Notes for this session.