

# LISTENING EFFECTIVENESS



FEEDBACK REPORT

**ActionCOACH**  
business coaching

**Sample Report**  
**7/29/2010**



# INTRODUCTION

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This Listening Effectiveness Feedback Report consists of six components, which are described below.

## **1. Overall Summary**

The summary results chart provides a quick visual representation of your scores in the seven competencies that make up the Listening Effectiveness profile. The areas to concentrate on are those scores above 3.5 (strong) and below 2.75 (need further development). Please note that these competency scores are averages; individual question scores can be viewed by clicking on the individual competency link.

## **2. Category Descriptions**

There are three sections for each of the seven competencies. The first of these three sections explains the competency, lists average scores, and then provides high and low score interpretation notes. The second section provides a graphical representation of individual question scores. The third section provides broadly-based improvement actions for those individuals wanting to develop their competencies.

## **3. 10/10 Report**

The "10/10" Report page provides the raw scores for the 10 highest scoring questions and the 10 lowest scoring questions out of the 84. It also identifies which competency each question is from.

## **4. Course and Reading Suggestions**

Development suggestions for the two lowest scoring competencies, including specific recommendations regarding training courses and books that will provide useful information on the topic are included.

## **5. Development Plan**

The development plan lists questions with the five lowest scores from the assessment and puts them into a one-page template. Individuals can use this template to record the specific actions they plan to take over the next twelve months based on the general guidance offered in their feedback report and the coaching tips.

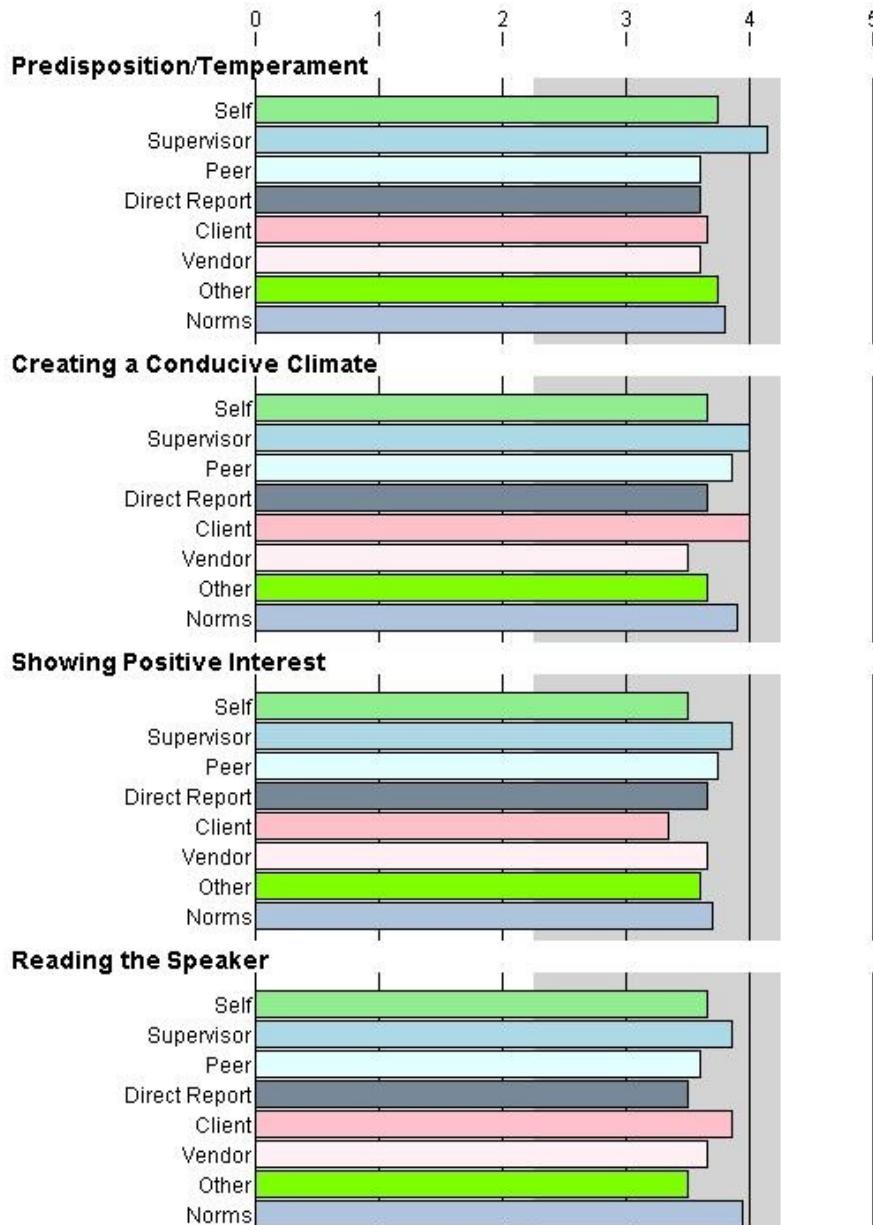
## **Note on 360 Degree Feedback**

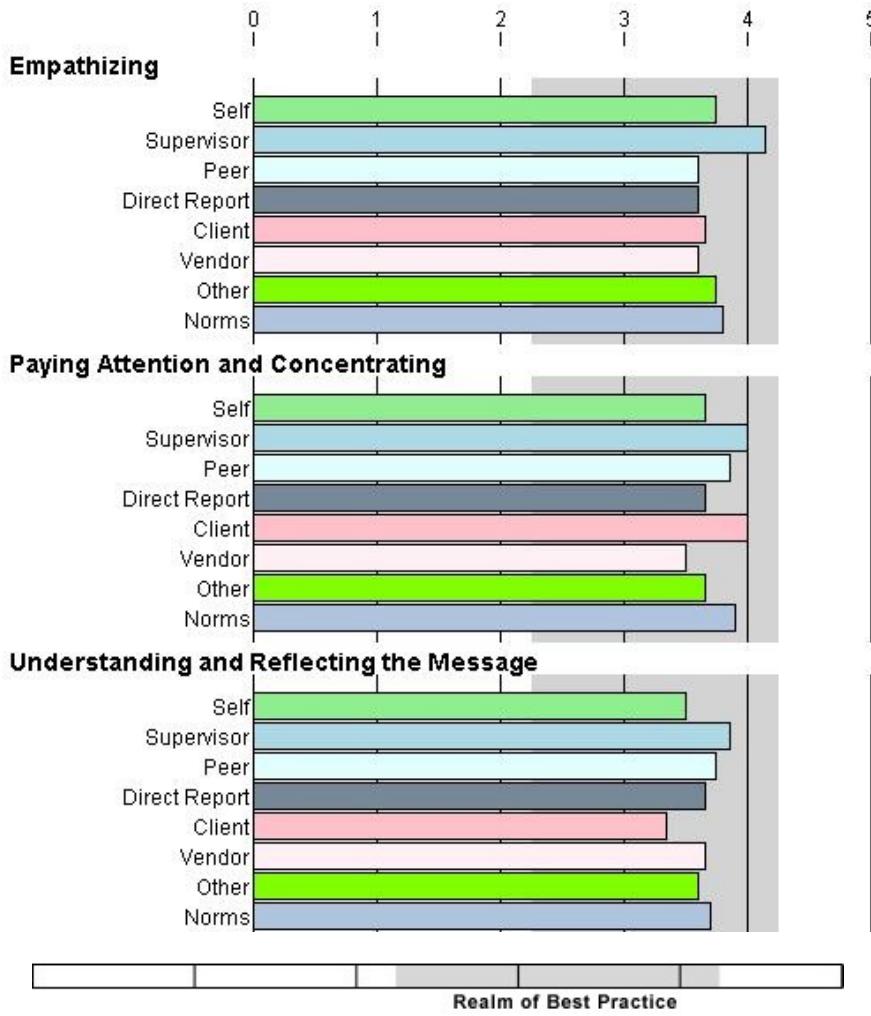
If you received feedback from your supervisor, direct reports or peers using this assessment, please note the following: Ratings responses from all persons who completed the assessment are averaged to produce the results in the 10/10 Report, Course and Reading Suggestions, Development Plan, and Coaching Tips.



## OVERALL SUMMARY

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**Norm bars shown on all graphs in this report are the progressive average scores of all individuals rating themselves on this questionnaire.**



# PREDISPOSITION/ TEMPERAMENT

This section on Predisposition/Temperament looks at your basic character predisposition, temperament, and internal desire to listen and acquire the patience to do so. It asks the question: "To what extent am I willing to invest my time and energy in the "careful listening" process?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

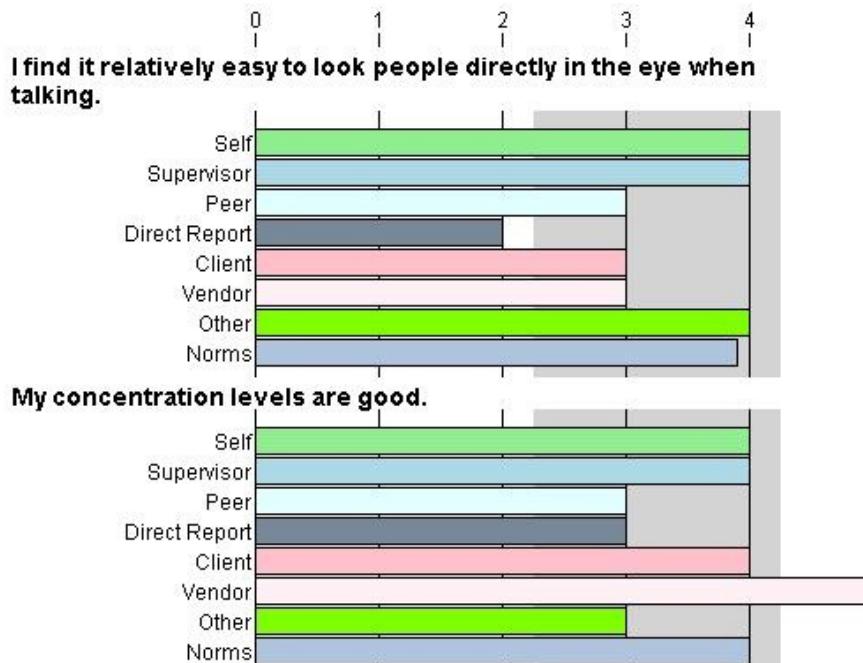
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you are often too rushed or distracted to listen properly. You are likely to make a hasty determination that some individuals are not worth listening to at all!

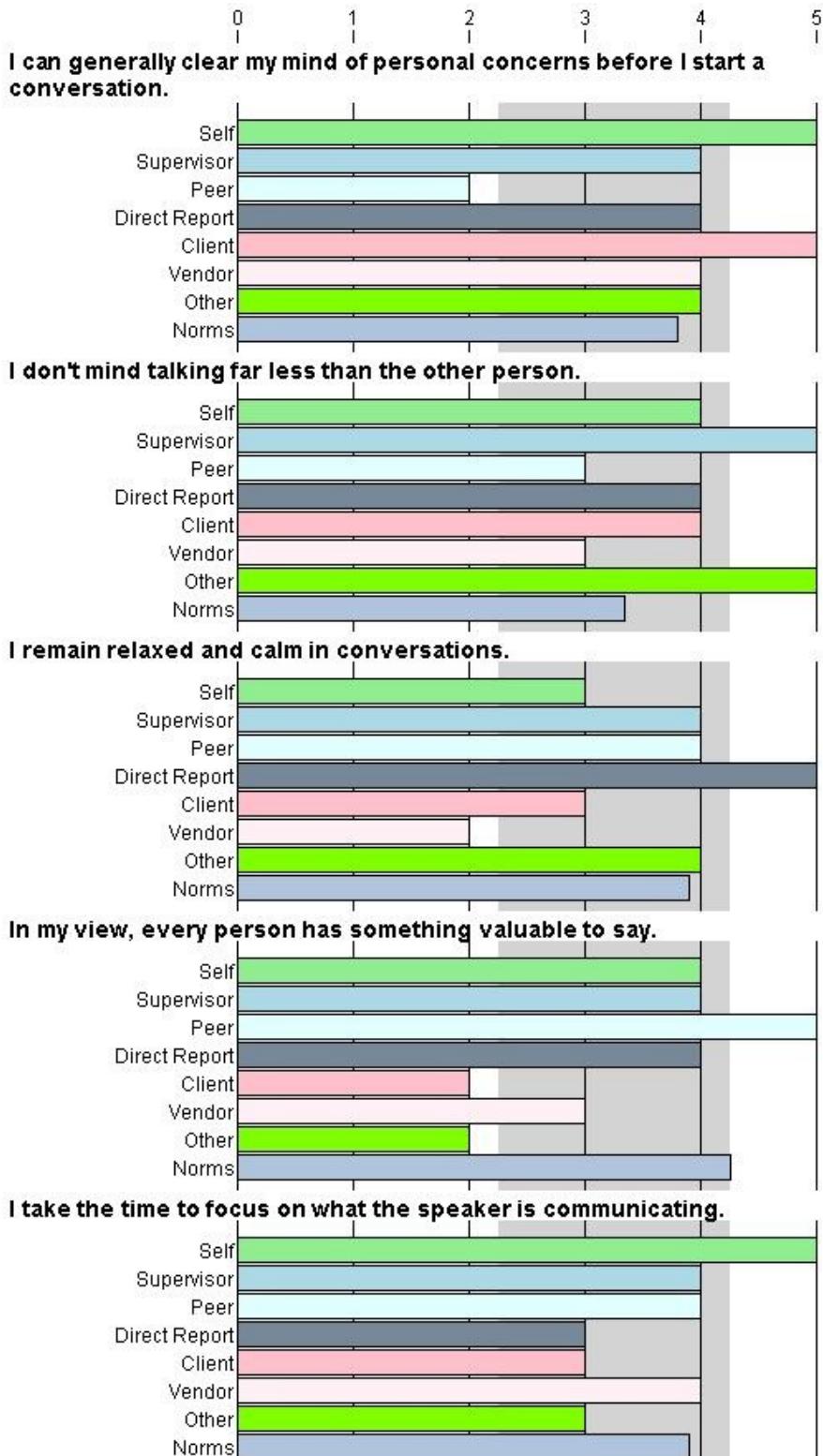
A low scorer finds listening attentively difficult in many circumstances, particularly when he or she has other things on their mind. Low scorers tend to interrupt more often, guess where the conversation is going, jump to conclusions, and become distracted more easily. This means that they are likely to miss parts of the communication message and won't even pick up on some of the more "subtle" points.

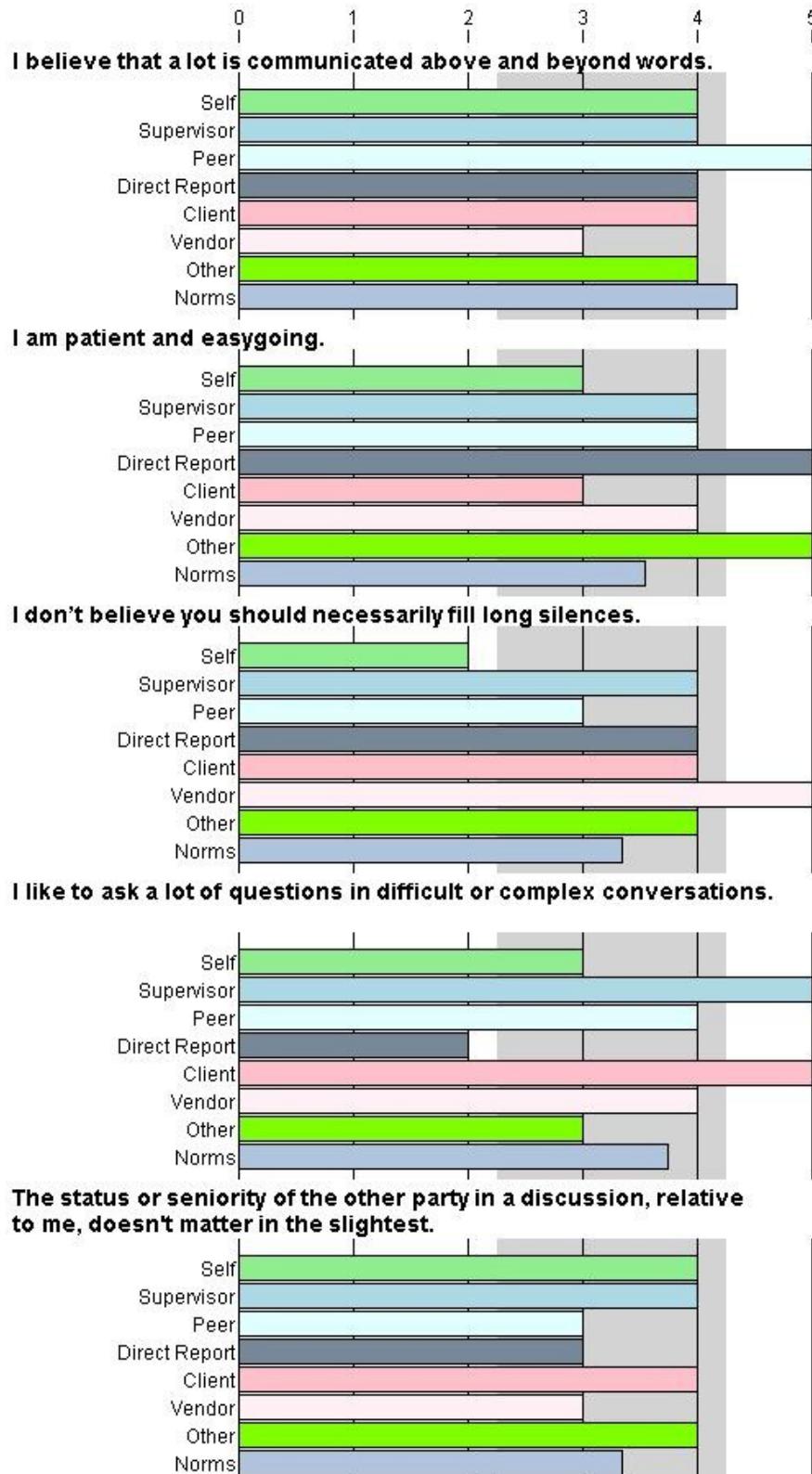
### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you take the time to listen to the speaker and focus on them so they are heard and understood. Your open, relaxed, and patient manner suggests that people enjoy sharing their views and feelings with you.

A high scorer will tend to put a speaker quickly at ease and create a permissive environment in which they will feel safe to share their ideas and their feelings. The high scorer is also able to tease out and read any "deeper" meanings behind the words of the communicator.







This section on Predisposition/Temperament looks at your basic character predisposition, temperament, and internal desire to listen and acquire the patience to do so. It asks the question: "To what extent am I willing to invest my time and energy in the "careful listening" process?"

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers need to make a conscious commitment to spend more time listening. They need to force themselves not to jump to conclusions, form hasty opinions, interrupt, or finish other people's sentences. Instead, they should practice being more patient; use pauses and silence more often in conversation; and ignore distractions. They must work to get rid of the habit of letting the mind drift. Low scorers should try to find a quiet environment in which to listen so they can give their full attention to the speaker.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Predisposition/Temperament**

- Make a conscious decision to talk substantially less and listen more.
- Use positive body language: stand squarely in front of people, avoid fidgeting, and maintain strong eye contact. Demonstrate your interest in what every speaker is saying, regardless of what you think of the message or the person.



# CREATING A CONDUCIVE CLIMATE

This section on Creating a Conducive Climate looks at your efforts to make sure that the atmosphere or environment is as appropriate as possible for effective communication. It asks the question: "Have you done everything you can to minimize distractions and create a climate for open conversation?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

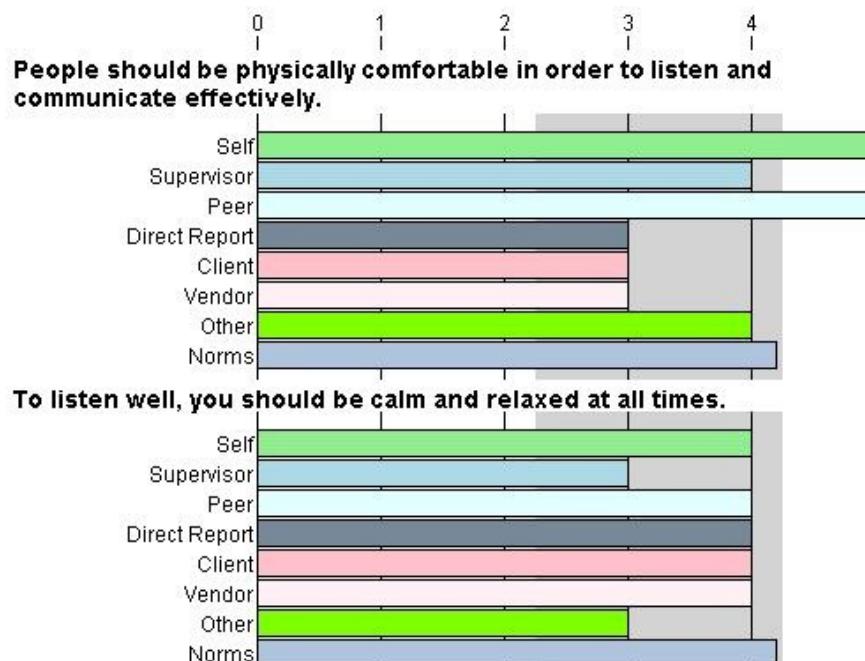
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you find yourself talking or trying to listen in an environment that will quickly interfere with your ability to concentrate or give your full focus and attention.

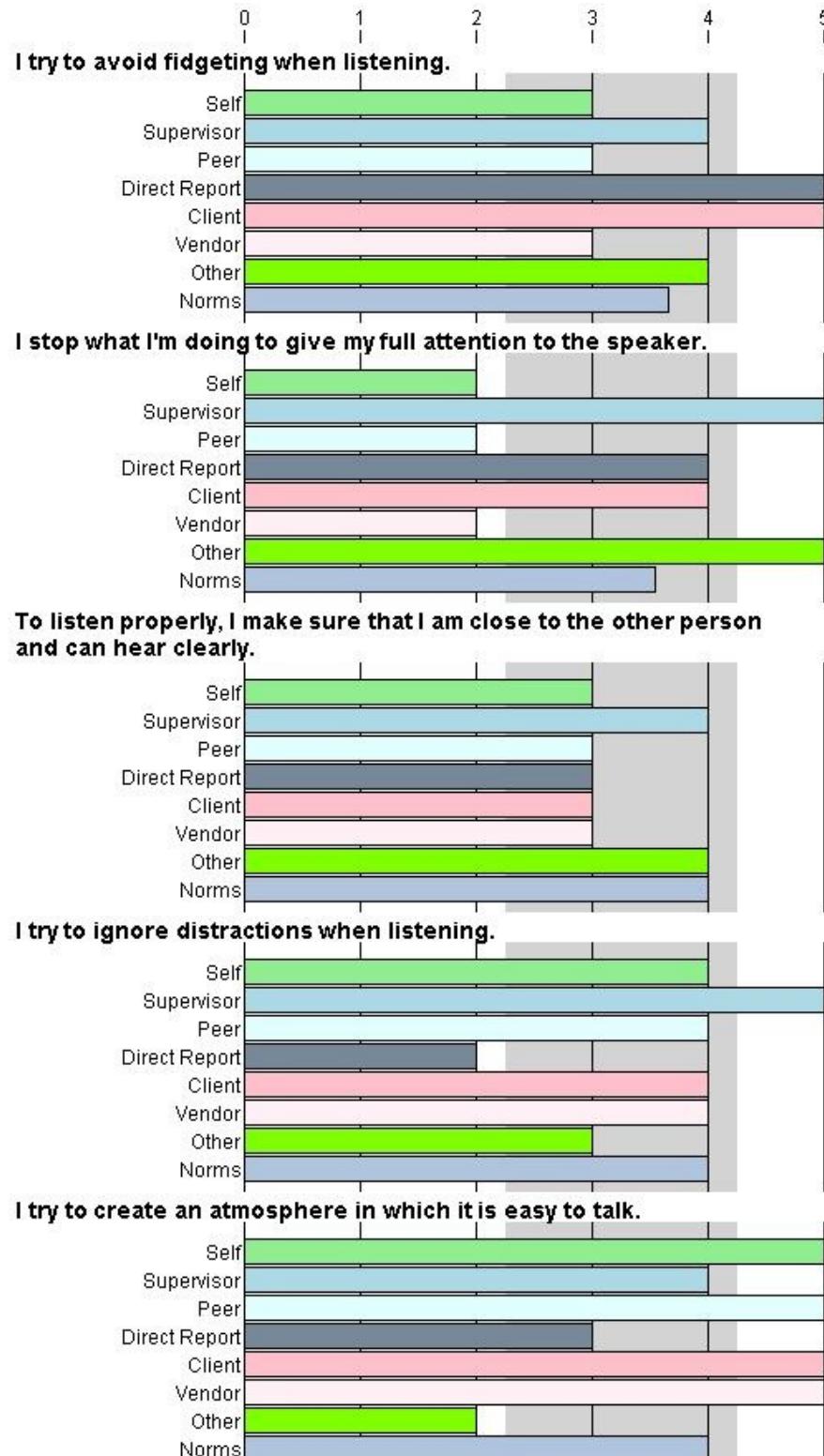
A low scorer tends to let the communication environment interfere with their attempts to listen. Some communications may therefore occur "on-the-run," or be confined to short or shallow messages.

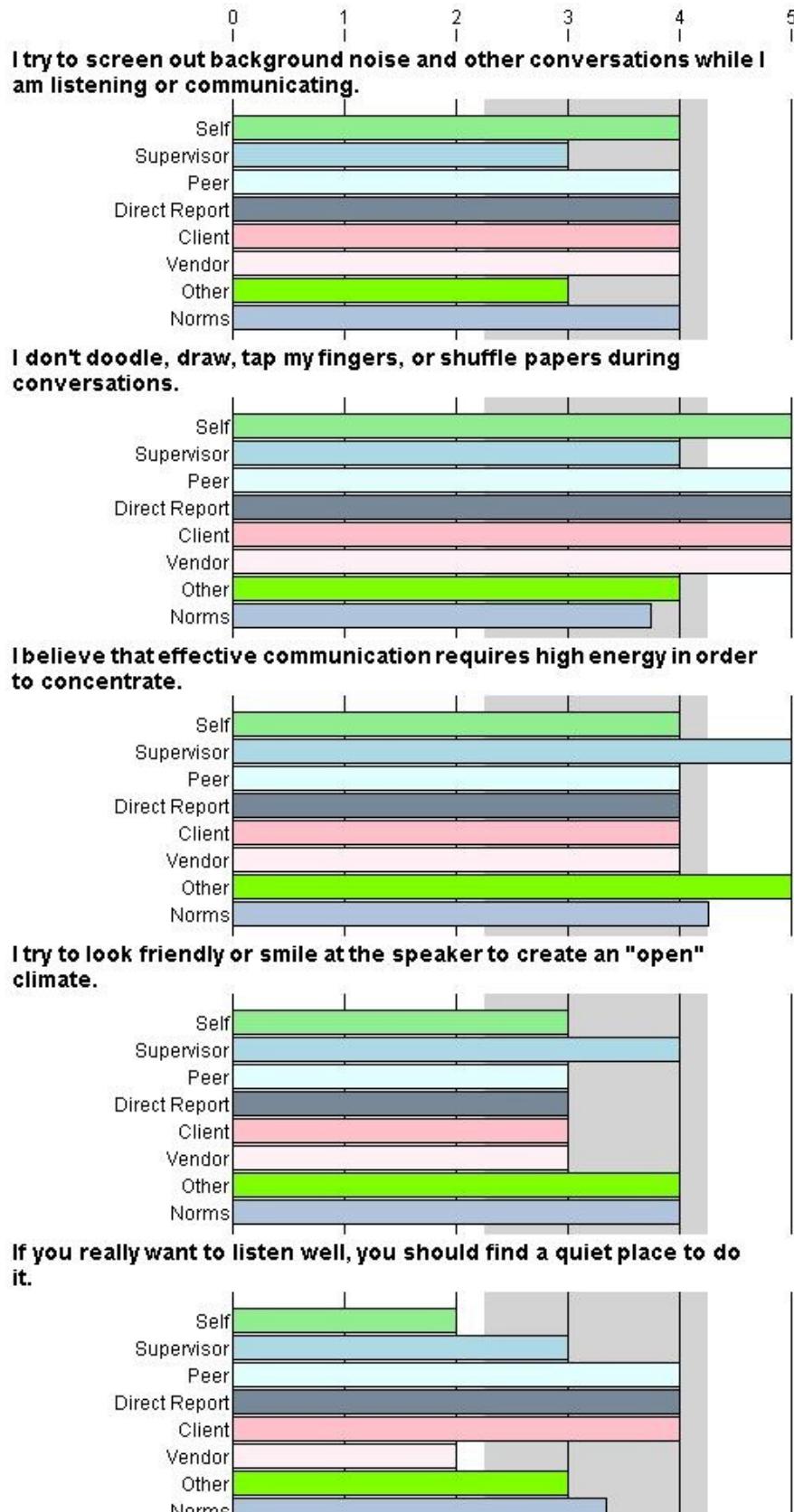
### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you are highly conscious of the need to find a quiet and calm communication environment, or one in which noise and distractions can be eliminated or at least managed so as not to be too intrusive.

A high scorer avoids trying to communicate anything more than idle "chit-chat" in an environment that is not conducive to good communication. Such a person prefers to find a place that is quiet and where all parties are comfortable. If there are distractions the high scorer will seek to filter these out or manage them so they don't interfere too much.







**This section on Creating a Conducive Climate looks at your effort to make sure that the atmosphere or environment is as appropriate as possible for effective communication. It asks the question: "Have you done everything you can to minimize distractions and create a climate for open conversation?"**

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers need to formally ask themselves whether or not the listening climate is appropriate for the topic of discussion or time needed. Once this assessment is made, the low scorer needs to look for a calm place to talk or a comfortable room, and then try to minimize any distractions including fidgeting. Low scorers should work on their "1" scores first, then the "2" scores, and so on. This approach of concentrating on weak areas first should be used in every category.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Creating a Conducive Climate**

Before the communication starts, mentally ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this communication environment comfortable for me and the other person to talk?
- Can we both hear properly?
- Are there any external distractions that are likely to interfere?
- Can I personally avoid interrupting the other party when he or she is speaking?



# SHOWING POSITIVE INTEREST

This section on Showing Positive Interest assesses your efforts to demonstrate how much you value the other party's message. It asks the question: "How much does the listener focus on the message and show the speaker that his or her message is being effectively received?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

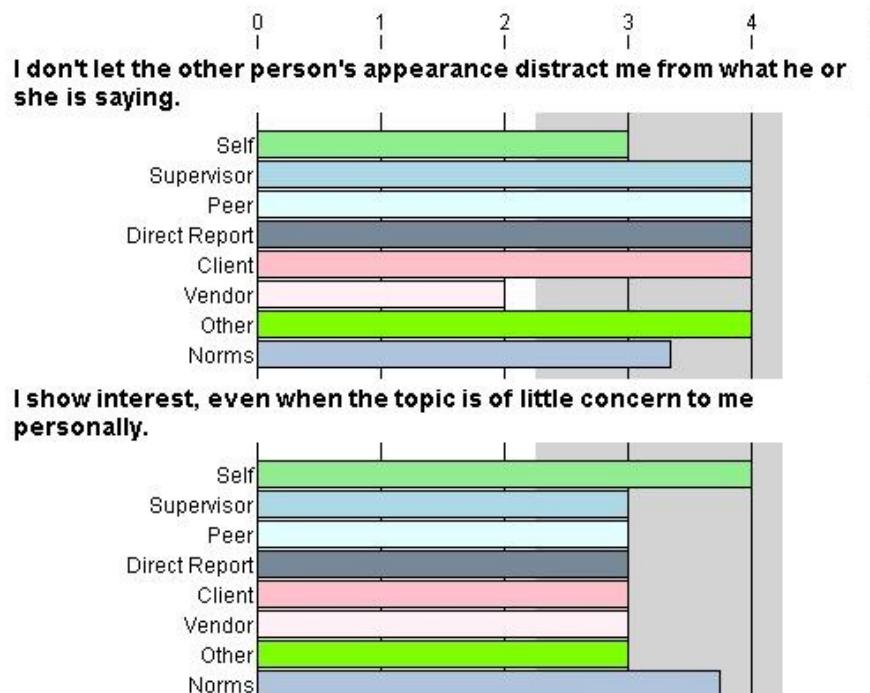
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you give the impression of being aloof, disinterested, and even unconcerned about the speaker and their topic.

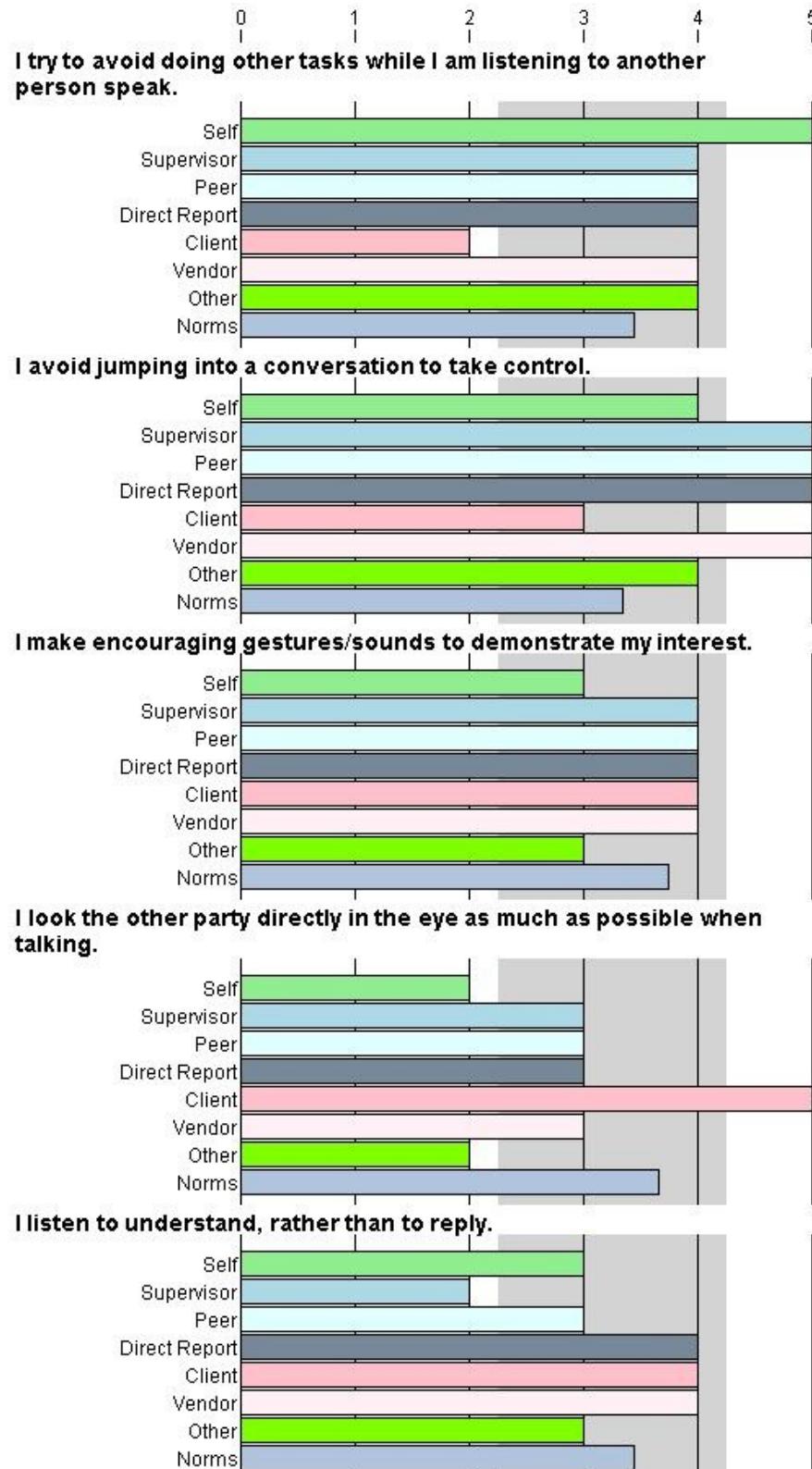
A low scorer will be likely to distract or even irritate the speaker by paying attention to almost everything else except the direct communication. Other parties are likely to learn to keep their communication with you short and terse, or look to others who will listen more openly or value what they want to say.

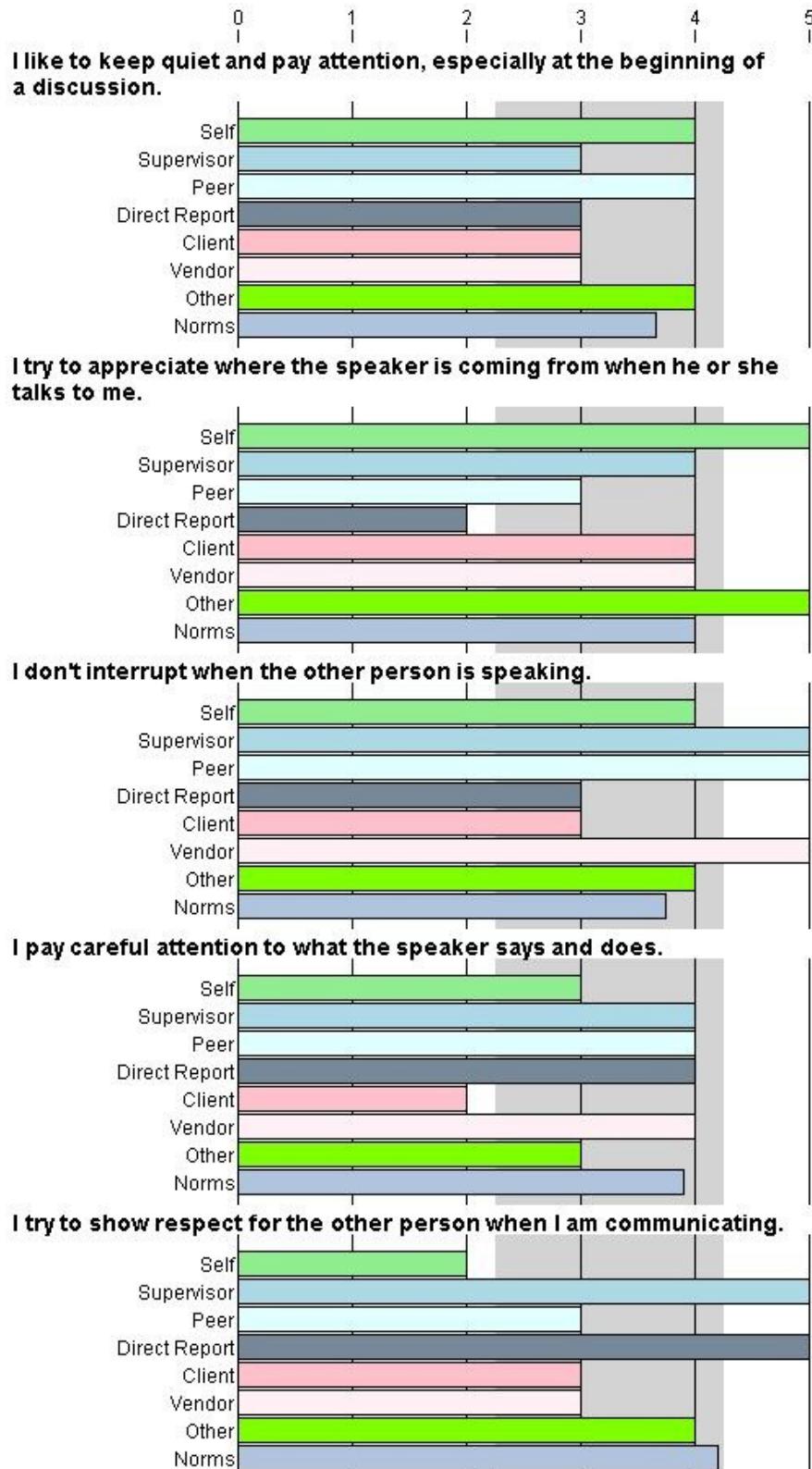
### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you openly show your respect for the other person and what he or she is trying to say to you. In addition, in conversation, you are likely to use a range of positive gestures and body language, and keep the discussion positive and open.

A high scorer immediately signals that he or she welcomes the other person's communication, and sustains focus and interest in full for the duration of the conversation. High scorers deliberately use positive nodding and other signals to help the flow of the conversation along, and they make the speaker feel good about themselves and their ability to get their message across.







**This section on Showing Positive Interest assesses your efforts to demonstrate how much you value the other party's message. It asks the question: "How much does the listener focus on the message and show the speaker that his or her message is being effectively received?"**

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers need to become much less judgmental or opinionated about who and what is worth listening to. They must adopt a more neutral mode while listening and try to make more eye contact. They should also avoid interrupting and try feeding back what they have heard from time to time. Above all, they show respect for every individual who communicates with them.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Showing Positive Interest**

- Even if this is hard to do in a completely sincere way at the outset, practice nodding, encouraging the speaker, and even smiling where appropriate. The more you do this, the more naturally that positive interest will be shown.
- When you have a turn to speak, tell the speaker about several points he or she made that you thought were especially good.



# READING THE SPEAKER

This section on "Reading" the Speaker looks at the extent to which you accurately evaluate and understand the complete message being communicated or shared. It asks the question: "What is the speaker trying to say over and above their words?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

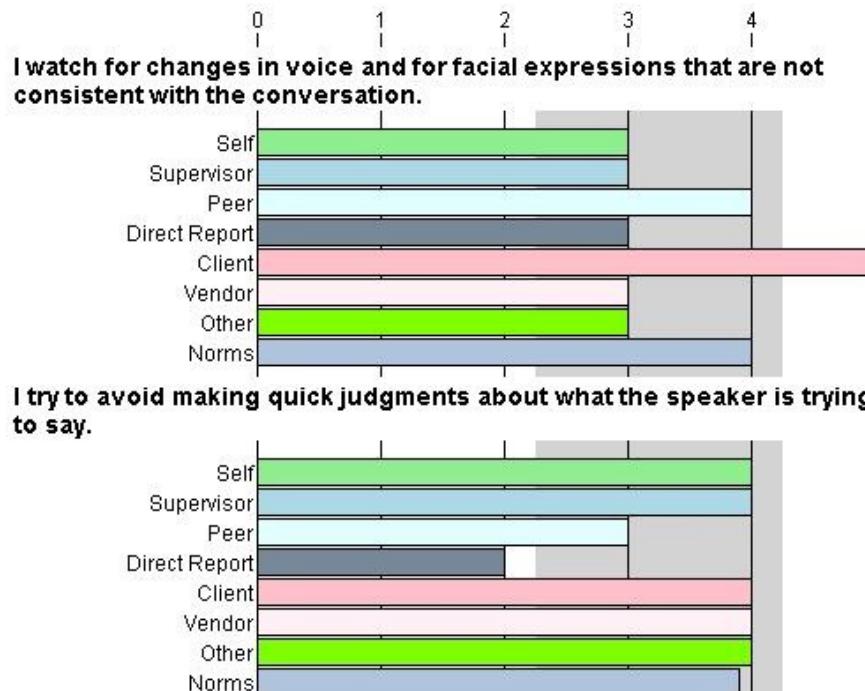
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you do not spend time looking beyond the words in order to determine what the other party might be saying. Your mind is often "cluttered" with other thoughts and you might even believe that all this "between the lines" and "body-language stuff" is overrated anyway.

A low scorer misses most of the indirect communication shared by another party, and therefore fails to understand people's statements, actions, or feelings. He or she makes fewer efforts to listen and is thus less able to get the overall message.

### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

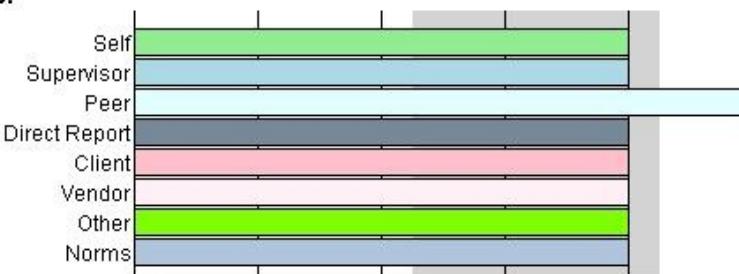
Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you stop yourself from anticipating what the other person means until you have read between the lines and behind the message. You are also likely to believe that observation is the key to effective listening and practice your observational skills frequently.

A high scorer almost senses the deeper meanings or more hidden messages in all but the most simple or shallow communications. This often gives such people useful insight into the speaker's thoughts and motives for future action.

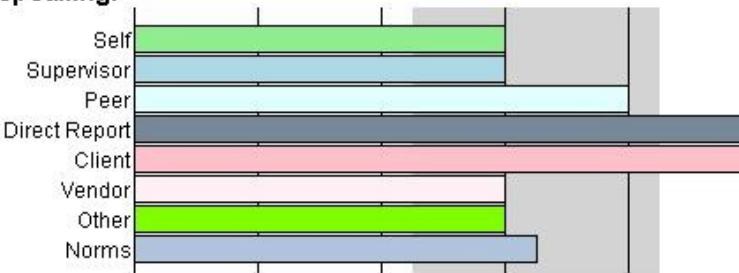




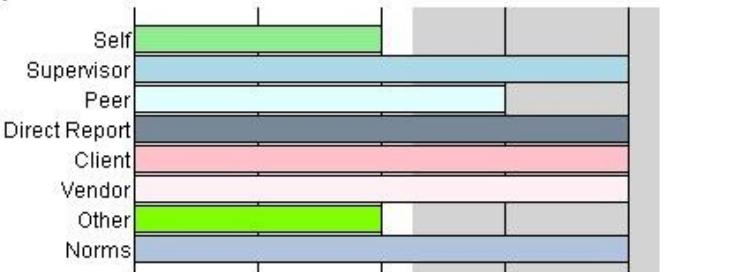
**People would say that I am a good sounding board for their ideas and concerns.**



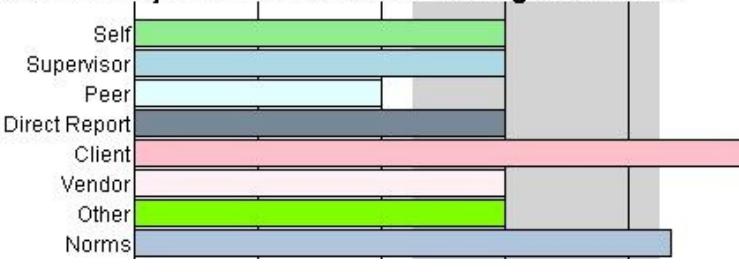
**I avoid anticipating the other person's words before they have finished speaking.**

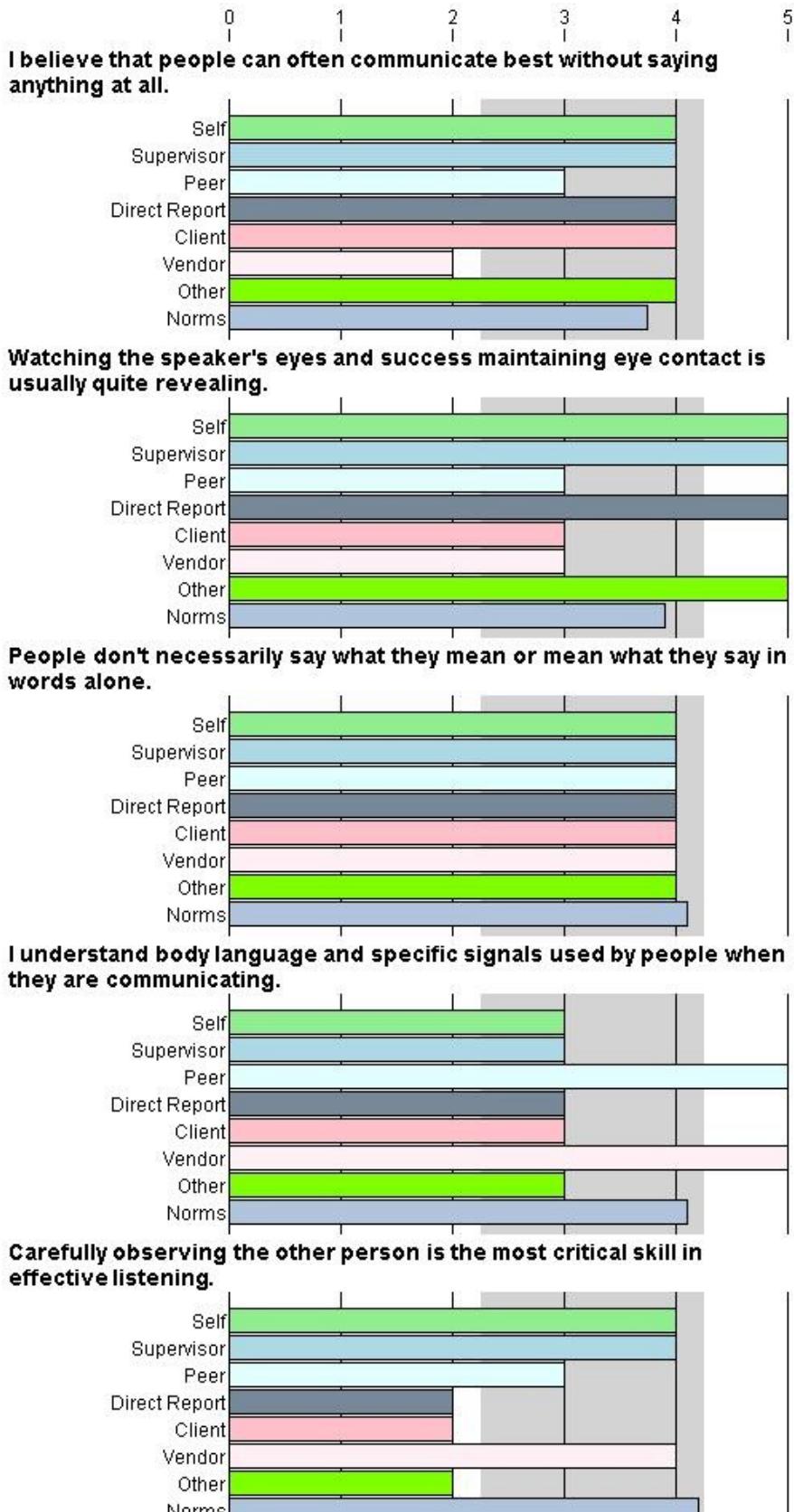


**I watch the speaker's general body language to get the complete message.**



**It is critical to look beyond the words when listening to someone.**





**This section on "Reading" the Speaker looks at the extent to which you accurately evaluate and understand the complete message being communicated or shared. It asks the question: "What is the speaker trying to say over and above their words?"**

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers need to recognize that words are only a small part of the overall communication mix and that they will not understand the full message unless they work harder at picking up on the more underlying elements. Reading books on body language and communication theory might help them recognize such clues. Quiet observation of the other person and their emotions is the most beneficial approach; with practice, even the lowest scorers will eventually learn to read others.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Reading the Speaker**

- Watch for small or subtle changes in the mood of the speaker or the way in which things are said in words or behavior.
- Watch the other person's eyes carefully, and listen for longer than might be comfortable so you get the full or complete picture.



# EMPATHIZING

This section on Empathizing assesses the extent to which you as a listener demonstrate open interest and a commitment to understanding the other person's feelings and overall message. It asks the question: "Does the speaker feel that the listener values and understands them and their message, and appreciates the context in which it is given?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

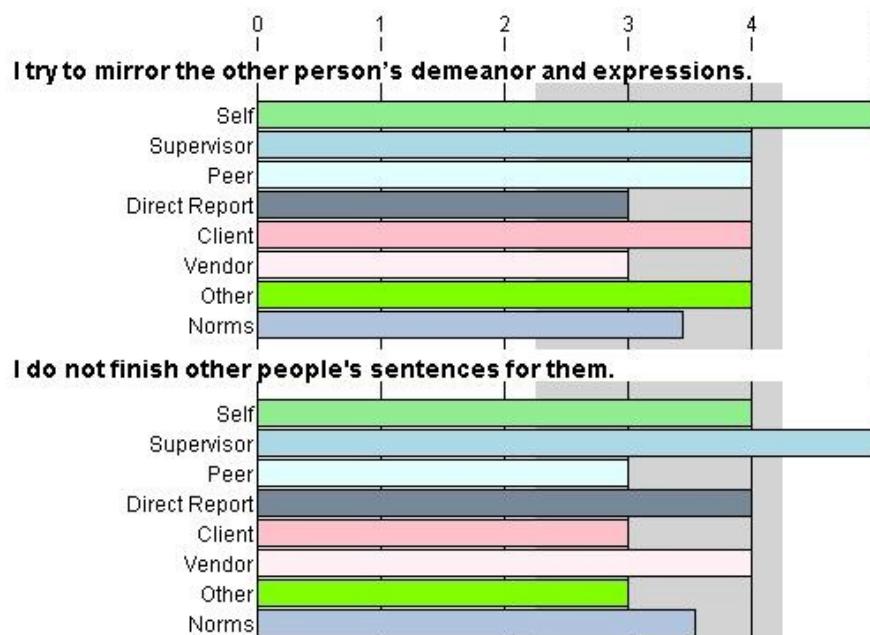
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you spend little or no time in trying to put yourself in the other person's shoes and do not seem to pay attention to what the other person is feeling.

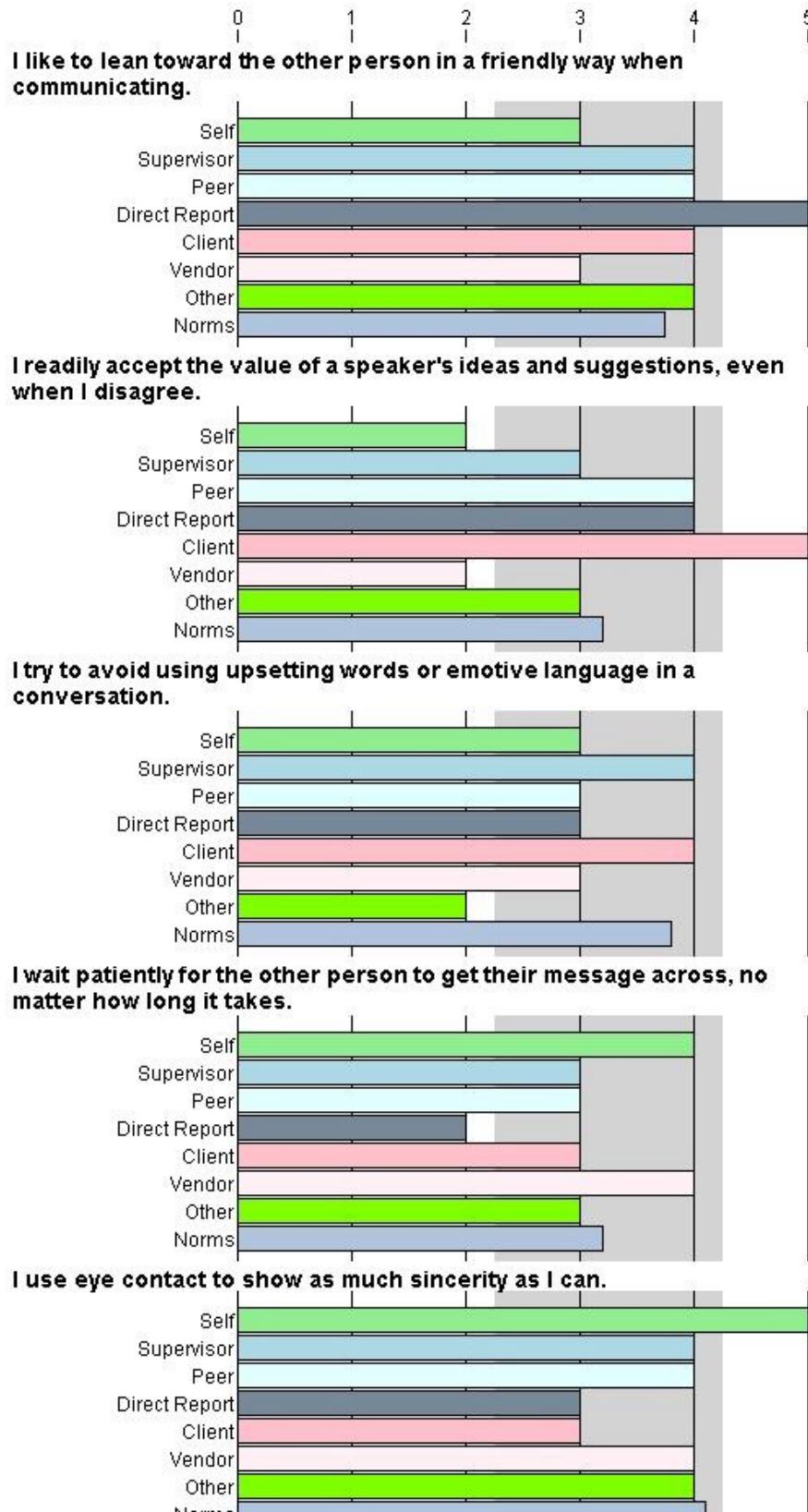
A low scorer tends to be a "transactional" communicator: An exchange is a simple task that must be completed before he or she can move on to the next one. Low scorers are likely to listen from their own perspective, and have little or no interest in knowing much about the other person.

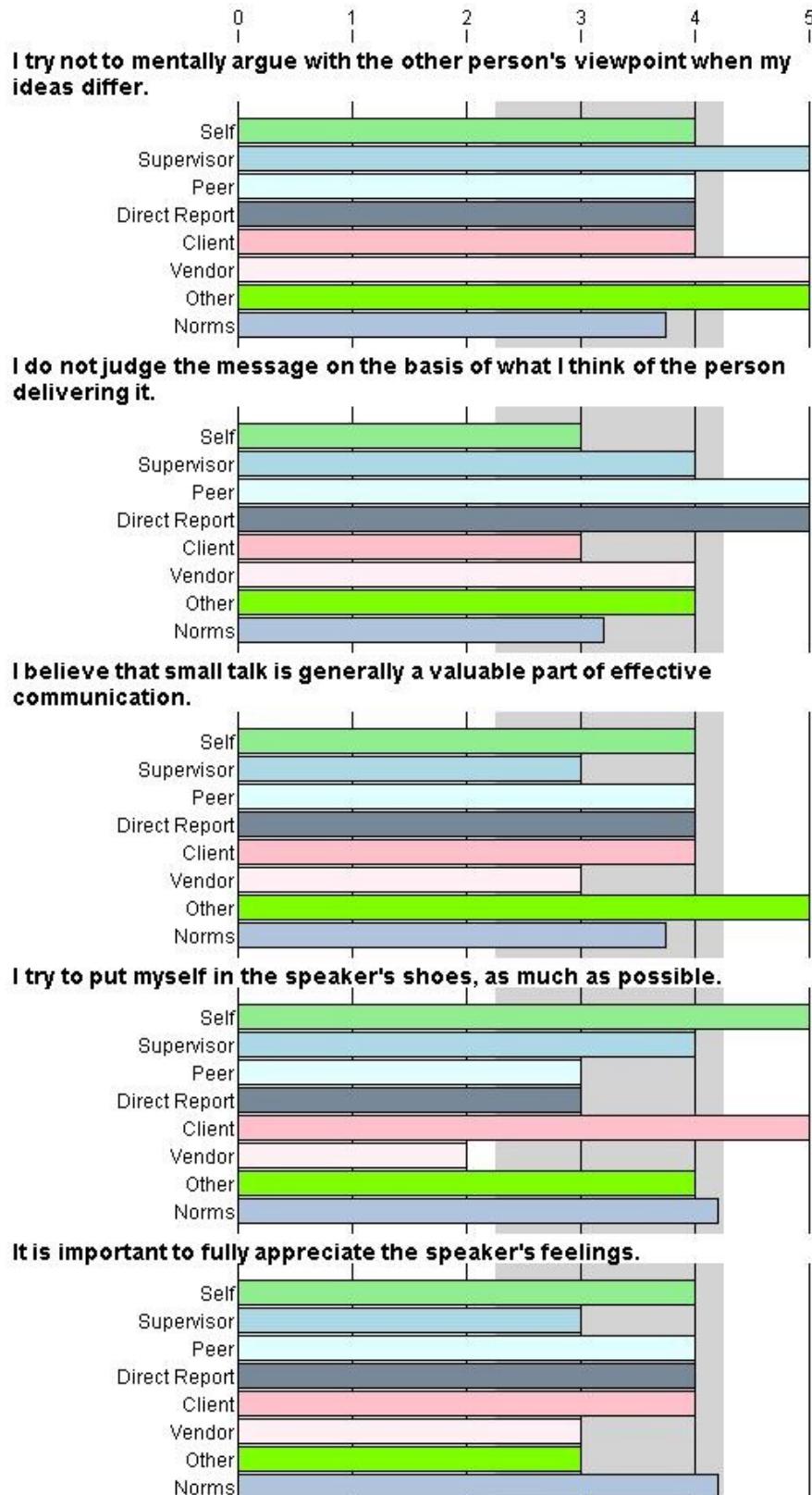
### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you quickly find common ground with whomever you are communicating with and demonstrate an appreciation for their feelings and their message.

A high scorer spends a considerable amount of time and effort trying to understand the other party's feelings. Such people try to respond in the most positive and empathetic way possible by sharing some of their own feelings. They are extremely effective at getting the speaker to "open-up."







This section on Empathizing assesses the extent to which you as a listener demonstrate interest and commitment to understanding the other person's feelings and overall message. It asks the question: "Does the speaker feel that the listener values and understands them and their message, and appreciates the context in which it is given?"

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers should try to be less direct or "aloof" in their communication, and less "in-charge" of the conversation. They need to take the time to find areas of commonality, rather than areas of difference. Ask the question: "What might I think if I were in their position?"

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Empathizing**

- Try to imagine yourself in the speaker's position and try to determine how the speaker is feeling as you listen to him or her. With a little practice, you can start to share a few experiences and feelings of your own and help open up the conversation.



# PAYING ATTENTION AND CONCENTRATING

This section on Paying Attention and Concentrating looks at how effective you are at maintaining your focus on what is being communicated verbally and nonverbally. It asks the question: "How well do you look for the core message and reflect back to the speaker an accurate understanding of the message?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

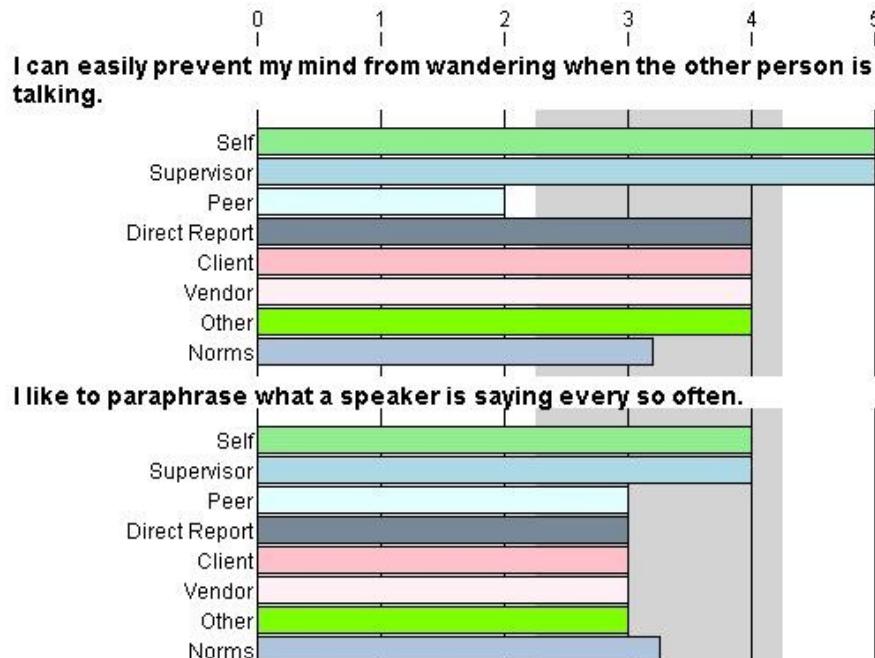
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you take what is said at face value and tend to drift off or let your mind wander, thereby missing important points in the discussion.

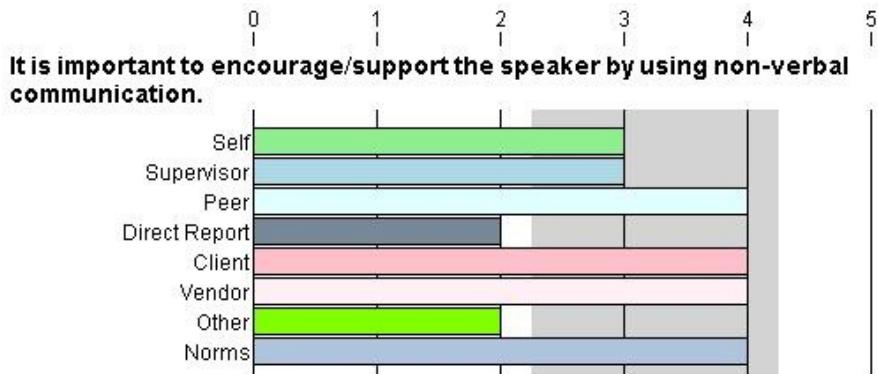
A low scorer is likely to pay more attention to his or her own thoughts and reflections than to the other person. Low scorers seldom ask questions of clarification (having neither the time nor the inclination), and thus become confused or misunderstand the message.

### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

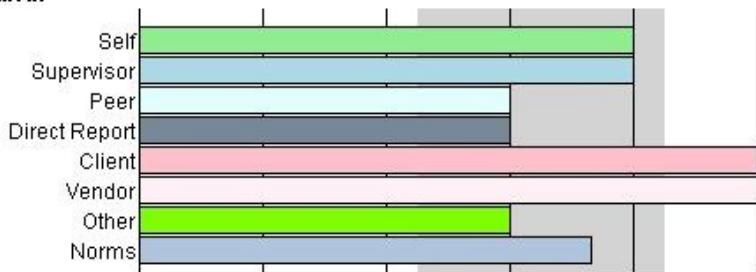
Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you ask questions to create clarity, as well as to paraphrase what is being said to keep the discussion focused and on track.

A high scorer puts significant energy and effort into concentrating on what the other person is saying and shows interest. He or she asks as many questions as are necessary in order to clarify and avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

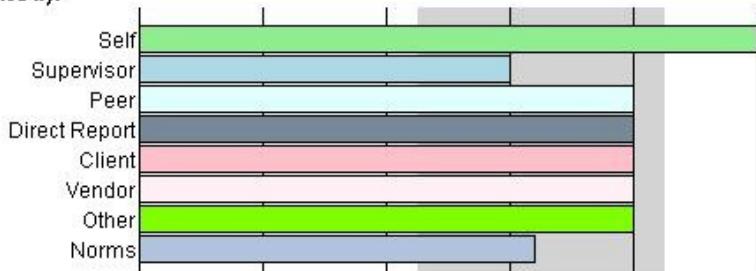




**I gently question those points or arguments that I do not fully understand.**



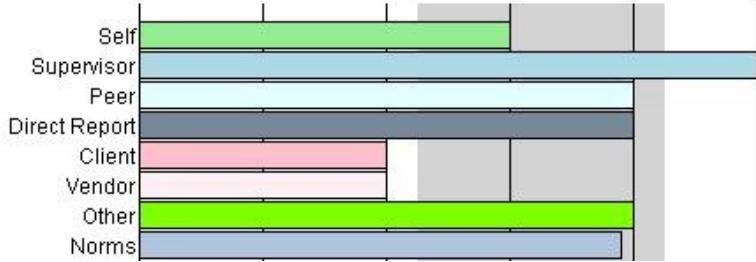
**If necessary, I take notes (especially if the communication is long or complicated).**

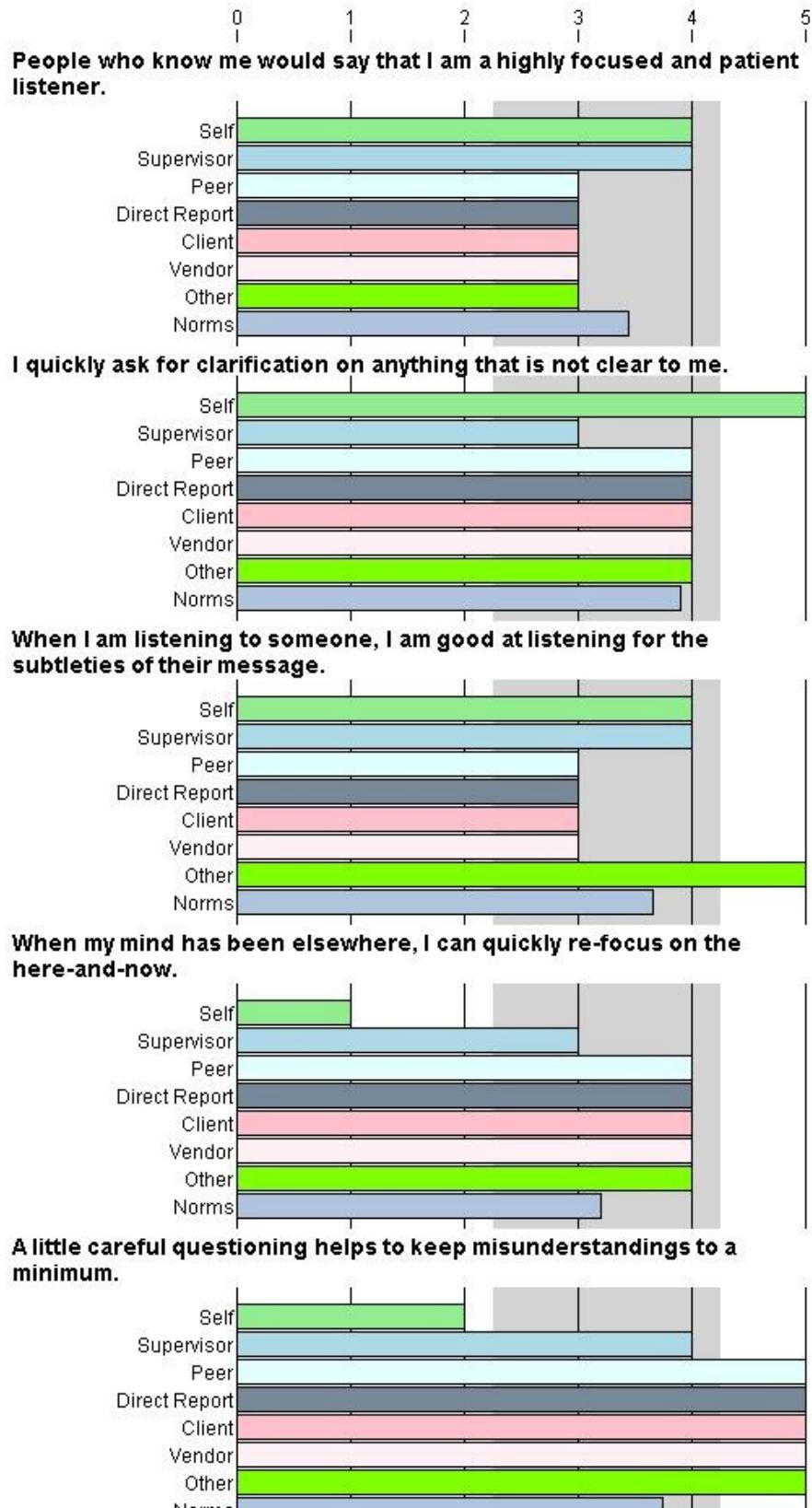


**If a speaker loses his or her train of thought, I help by summarizing.**



**I like to ask questions in order to "tease out" as much information as I can.**





**This section on Paying Attention and Concentrating looks at how effective you are at maintaining your focus on what is being communicated—both verbally and nonverbally. It asks the question: "How well do you look for the core message and reflect back to the speaker an accurate understanding of the message?"**

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scores need to have a range of questions in their conversational toolkit that they can ask to keep them involved in the listening process and clear on what they are hearing. (e.g., "Did I hear you say that?" and "Would you expand on that please?" They should practice asking these questions, and when they use them in an actual conversation, they should pay close attention and should listen for the full response without interrupting.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Paying Attention and Concentrating**

- Concentrate as much as possible on what the other person is saying, and not on thinking about your next response. Ask a question or two, if appropriate, to keep yourself focused on them.
- If necessary, take notes on what you hear, and use "affirming" body language to show the speaker that you are focused on what they are saying.



# UNDERSTANDING AND REFLECTING THE MESSAGE

This section on Understanding and Reflecting the Message looks at your effectiveness at interpreting what the speaker is saying and then letting them know that you have understood the message. It asks the question: "How well do you as a listener summarize the key points and accurately paraphrase what is being communicated?"



## Interpretation

### LOW (less than 2.75)

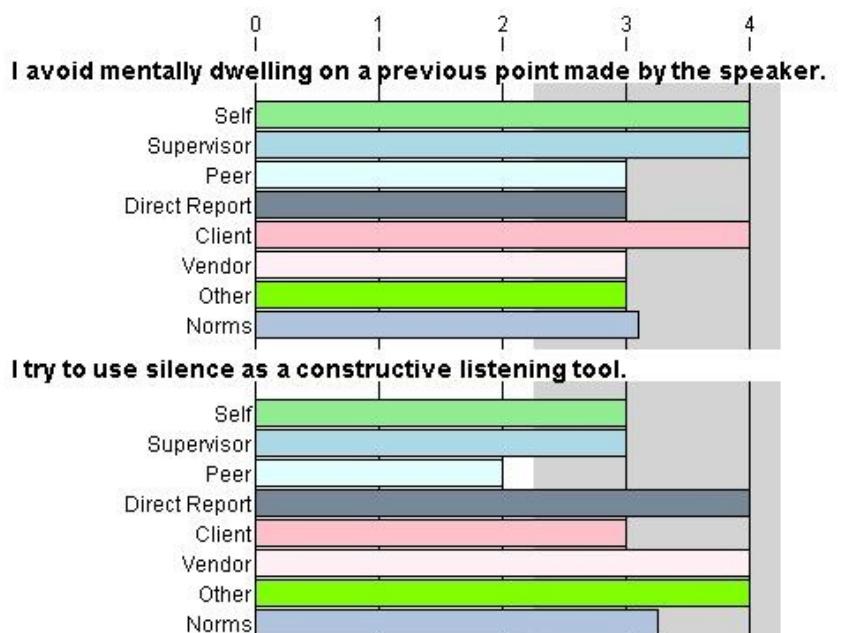
Response ratings predominantly in the ones and twos ("occasionally" and "almost never") suggest that you probably rush conversations and do not make good use of the opportunity to summarize or sum up (if at all).

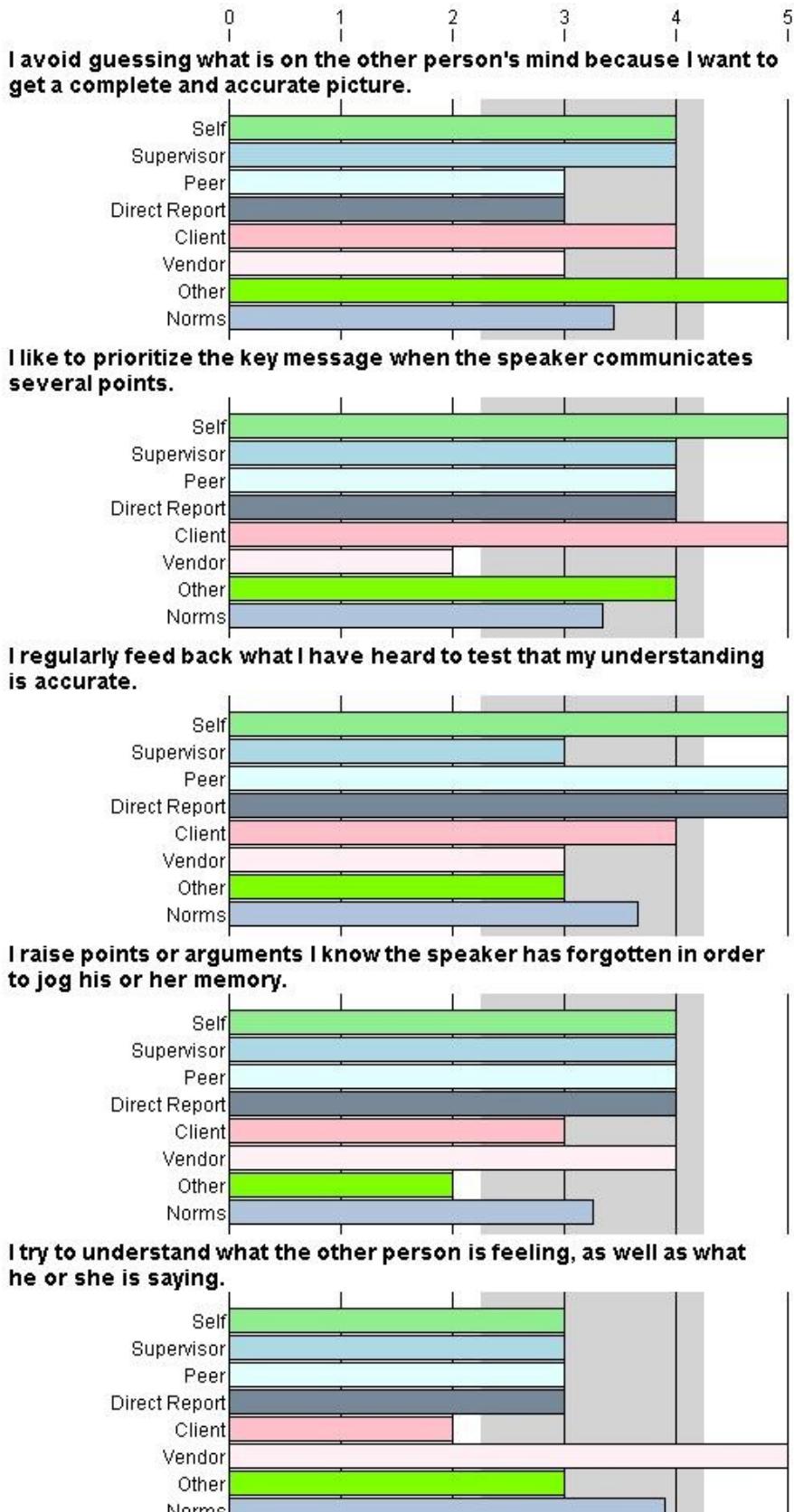
A low scorer tends to selectively listen or only pay attention to parts of the conversation, and therefore has insufficient information to summarize well. The "quality" of the conversation consequently suffers, and both parties will not always be entirely clear that they have reached a common understanding at the end.

### HIGH (greater than 3.5)

Response ratings predominantly in the fours and fives ("almost always" and "very frequently") suggest that you work hard at interpreting and evaluating what a speaker is really trying to say, and repeat it back to them in summary form so that a mutual understanding can be reached.

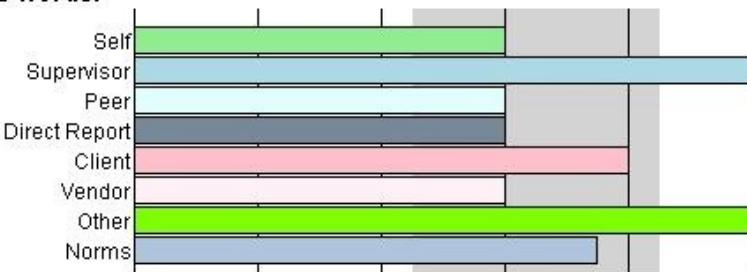
A high scorer avoids lengthy periods during a conversation when they have neglected to provide a quick summary or reflect back the message before moving on. High scorers maintain their focus on the speaker and the message, and demonstrate their interest and desire for clarity by asking questions and occasionally summarizing what they are learning. Communications are often therefore much more effective and focused.



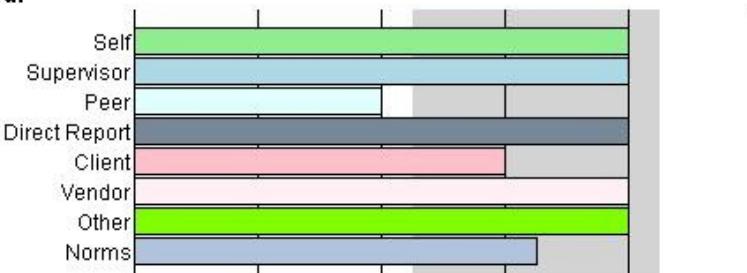




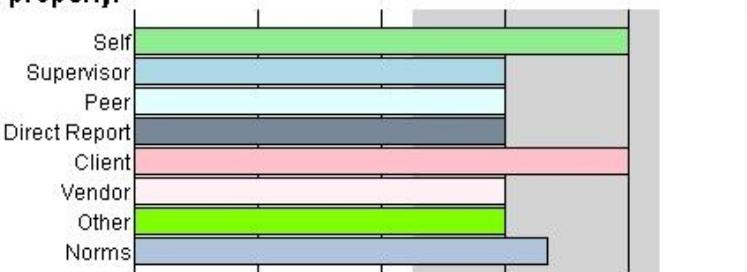
**I try to listen for the overall message or key theme behind the speaker's words.**



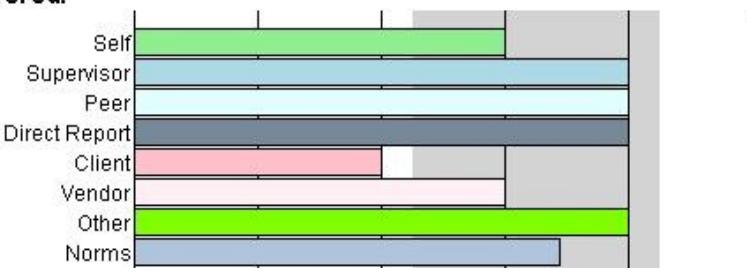
**I try to close any conversation by reflecting back the major things discussed.**



**I paraphrase often in order to confirm that I have understood the message properly.**



**At the end of a communication, I summarize the main points that have been covered.**



**This section on Understanding and Reflecting the Message** looks at your effectiveness at interpreting what the speaker is saying and then letting them know that you have understood the message. It asks the question: "How well do you as a listener summarize the key points and accurately paraphrase what is being communicated?"

### **Recommendations for Overall Improvement**

Low scorers need to "tune-in" to the speaker as much as they are able. At an appropriate time they should then summarize what they think they've heard so the speaker can make any necessary clarifications. They should concentrate on the message: The challenge is to discover it and to confirm directly that this interpretation is accurate.

### **Ways to Strengthen or Improve Understanding and Reflecting the Message**

- Try to slow down your own thinking during conversation and concentrate on the whole message from the speaker, including the words and the emotions that are transmitted.
- As a direct test of your ability, try to paraphrase what you hear from time to time to check your understanding. The speaker can then correct any misunderstanding.



# THE 10/10 REPORT

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## Top 10 Strengths

### **Creating a Conducive Climate**

21 .I don't doodle, draw, tap my fingers, or shuffle papers during conversations. 4.71

### **Paying Attention and Concentrating**

72 .A little careful questioning helps to keep misunderstandings to a minimum. 4.43

### **Empathizing**

56 .I try not to mentally argue with the other person's viewpoint when my ideas differ. 4.43

### **Showing Positive Interest**

28 .I avoid jumping into a conversation to take control. 4.43

### **Reading the Speaker**

39 .I take mental note of any ideas or suggestions made by the other person. 4.29

### **Creating a Conducive Climate**

22 .I believe that effective communication requires high energy in order to concentrate. 4.29

### **Paying Attention and Concentrating**

66 .If a speaker loses his or her train of thought, I help by summarizing. 4.14

### **Reading the Speaker**

45 .Watching the speaker's eyes and success maintaining eye contact is usually quite revealing. 4.14

40 .People would say that I am a good sounding board for their ideas and concerns. 4.14

### **Showing Positive Interest**

34 .I don't interrupt when the other person is speaking. 4.14

## Top 10 Development Needs

### **Showing Positive Interest**

30 .I look the other party directly in the eye as much as possible when talking. 3.00

### **Reading the Speaker**

48 .Carefully observing the other person is the most critical skill in effective listening. 3.00

### **Creating a Conducive Climate**

24 .If you really want to listen well, you should find a quiet place to do it. 3.14

### **Showing Positive Interest**

26 .I show interest, even when the topic is of little concern to me personally. 3.14

### **Reading the Speaker**

43 .It is critical to look beyond the words when listening to someone. 3.14

### **Empathizing**

53 .I try to avoid using upsetting words or emotive language in a conversation. 3.14

54 .I wait patiently for the other person to get their message across, no matter how long it takes. 3.14

### **Paying Attention and Concentrating**

63 .It is important to encourage/support the speaker by using non-verbal communication. 3.14

### **Understanding and Reflecting the Message**

79 .I try to understand what the other person is feeling, as well as what he or she is saying. 3.14

### **Predisposition/Temperament**

1 .I find it relatively easy to look people directly in the eye when talking. 3.29



# COURSE AND READING SUGGESTIONS

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**Here is a link to a 12 page workbook that can help you further**  
<http://assessments24x7.com/rsb/RSBI.pdf>

The following are general reading and course suggestions that may help you to better understand the two categories in which your scores were the lowest and to assist you in writing your development plan.

## **Understanding and Reflecting the Message**

This section on Understanding and Reflecting the Message looks at your effectiveness at interpreting what the speaker is saying and then letting them know that you have understood the message. It asks the question: "How well do you as a listener summarize the key points and accurately paraphrase what is being communicated?"

### **Course Suggestion**

- Interviewing skills
- Asking probing questions
- Paraphrasing and summarizing skills
- Communication skills

### **Other Suggestion**

- If you feel comfortable to do so, talk to your direct supervisor/manager or a training and development specialist about personal training, coaching, and specific projects to improve your skills and other possible support they may be able to offer.

### **Reading Suggestion**

- Between People : Communicating One-To-One, John A. Sanford
- Active Listening : Building Skills for Understanding (Active Listening), Marc Helgesen, et al.
- The Business of Listening: A Practical Guide to Effective Listening (Fifty-Minute Series.), Diane Bone, et al.
- Speakers, Listeners and Communication: Explorations in Discourse Analysis, Gillian Brown
- The Art of Winning Conversation: Proven Communication Techniques for Personal and Professional Success, Morey Stettner

## **Showing Positive Interest**

This section on Showing Positive Interest assesses your efforts to demonstrate how much you value the other party's message. It asks the question: "How much does the listener focus on the message and show the speaker that their message is being effectively received?"

### **Course Suggestion**

- Body language interpretation
- Building warmth and empathy
- Interviewing skills
- Influencing others

### **Other Suggestion**

- If you feel comfortable to do so, talk to your direct supervisor/manager or a training and development specialist about personal training, coaching, and specific projects to improve your skills and other possible support they may be able to offer.

### **Reading Suggestion**

- Conversation Analysis : Principles, Practices, and Applications, Ian Hutchby, Robin Wooffitt
- As I Was Saying ... Conversation Tactics, Jack C. Richards, Jonathan Hull (Contributor)
- Effective Listening (Management Skills Workshop Series), Gilbert L. Whiteman
- Listening skills workbook, Mariana Brkich and Jon Warner



## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

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Use the space below to write out your personal development plan for the next 12 months based on your results. Draw upon the general improvement actions in relevant areas of the report, and ideas that are suggested in the attached coaching tips.

I look the other party directly in the eye as much as possible when talking.  
Action to Take:

Score: 3.00

Carefully observing the other person is the most critical skill in effective listening.  
Action to Take:

Score: 3.00

If you really want to listen well, you should find a quiet place to do it.  
Action to Take:

Score: 3.14

I show interest, even when the topic is of little concern to me personally.  
Action to Take:

Score: 3.14

It is critical to look beyond the words when listening to someone.  
Action to Take:

Score: 3.14