1. There is a vast abundance of material regarding listening. I’ve found items that fit into two major categories I came up with: physical behaviors and emotional behaviors. Among the physical behaviors, I’ve found one of the biggest keys to good listening is to stop talking (No Author, No Date). Following that, a big key is to pause before responding. I’ve only found one source that gives a number estimate to wait: 2 seconds (Smith, No Date). For the sake of brevity, I will only list those two physical behaviors, as they seem to be most important, and there are many, many others.

As for emotional behaviors, both sources I listed say to listen for ideas, not just words. In other words, listen for the message within the message (Smith, No Date). Another good quality both sources agree on is letting “them” go first, which seems to give them the feeling that they are valued. Another key to listening is to avoid personal prejudice, empathizing, and being patient (No Author, No Date).

Smith, T. (No Date). 10 Ways To Be A Good Listener. Retrieved from: <http://www.littlethingsmatter.com/blog/2010/03/03/10-ways-to-being-a-good-listener1/>

No Author. (No Date). Listening Skills. Retrieved from: <http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/listening-skills.html>

2. My results show I am a below average listener. Honestly, I think that’s true. Most listening I have to do is not-active, so I get bored quickly therefore disinterested. With my close friends, communication is very engaging as we are always active. I think for me to listen properly I need somebody who is actually interesting trying to tell me things.

3. I think #2 shows all when it comes to how good of a listener I am. I’m not that good, especially when the person telling me things is boring. I was in a group in another class a few weeks ago and my partner just droned on. He had a monotone voice and was incredibly disinteresting. On the other hand, with my close friends, conversation is always upbeat as we either always have a new topic, or talk in an active and engaging manner. That right there is key to improving my listening ability, and how well I actually listen. The speaker needs to be interesting and engaging. As for things interfering with my listening: the only thing that comes to mind next to my phone ringing is the speaker being interesting

4. There’s actually a surprising amount of information about paying attention in class that gives no actual advice, rather explaining good and bad listening in conversation, not in an educational setting. Of all the information I did find, all material agrees that consistent, proper seating helps students pay more attention (Glenn, Feb 5, 2014). It seems that sitting in the front row is optimal, as distractions make the user feel much guiltier as it shows almost direct disrespect to the teacher as they can see the user being distracted (Glenn, Feb 5, 2014). Also, sitting in the same location and with good posture is also good (No Author, No Date). As for the instructors, one resource stated that being active and engaging while avoiding ‘listening stoppers’ is the best way to keep students’ attention (Borba, No Date). Some other important points that are less impacting on active listening in class include doing homework, eye contact, getting enough sleep and eating well (No Author, No Date).

Borba, M. (No Date). How can I improve my child’s listening skills? Retrieved from: <http://www.sharecare.com/health/intellectual-changes-in-school-age-child/how-improve-child-listening-skills>

No Author. (No Date). How to Pay Attention in a Dull Class. Retrieved from: <http://www.wikihow.com/Pay-Attention-in-a-Dull-Class>

Glenn, W. (February 5, 2014). Pay Better Attention in Class with Consistent Seating. Retrieved from: <http://lifehacker.com/pay-better-attention-in-class-with-consistent-seating-1516762172>

5.

a. When I am truly listening, I keep face-contact(my version of eye contact without actually looking into people’s eyes, but giving the illusion that you are looking into their eyes), I actively urge the speaker on with things like “yup” and “uh-huh” or “sure”. Then, I respond to what they said, not what I hoped they’d say.

b. I don’t like eye contact as it is distracting, but I would like people to be looking at or around me. Also, urging me to continue is also a good indication somebody is listening to me. Afterwards, responding to what I said pretty much tells me they listened to what I said.

c. If a person agrees with me, they normally stand a little straighter and say things like “yup”. Also, they tend to seem more interested than not.

d. If a person does not agree with me, they normally cross their arms, and they seem to be dissatisfied, even edgy to get their point in and correct what I’ve said

e. Honestly, if somebody doesn’t understand what I’m saying they need to ask me questions. Most of the time they have a confused look on their face, but I tend not to notice and just continue with what I was saying.