

M3D1: Would You Call Yourself A Listener or a Talker?

Ashton Hellwig

Department of Mathematics

Front Range Community College

COM125: Interpersonal Communication

Richard Thomas

November 21, 2020 23:59:59 MDT

Abstract

Overview

For reflection: Are you a listener? Or, are you a talker? Can you be both simultaneously?

If you are more of a talker than a listener, what topics are you interesting in talking about? Do you feel you sometimes share more about yourself than is wise and, in particular, on social media?

Sometimes, we are not really listening to what is being said resulting in our jumping to conclusions. Do you experience this often?

You should spend approximately 4 hours on this assignment.

M3D1: Would You Call Yourself A Listener or a Talker?**Initial Post****Instructions**

1. In the video appearing within the topic titled, “Skills of Effective Listening” we saw the conflict that resulted from Erin Brokovich not listening effectively to Ed. Can you relate more to Erin or Ed? Do you think gender comes into play?
2. Based on your personal experiences, you might have some initial ideas of what ineffective and effective listening skills are, but what is documented in the research? For this discussion, you will start by researching ineffective and effective listening skills and the differences in listening between women and men. You will need to explore enough scholarly articles to create your lists and response.
3. Specifically define *listening* then create two lists based on your research.
 - (a) Effective Listeners Top 5 List: One list will be where you rank the 5 most important skills of effective listeners. The skill you feel is most important should be ranked as number 1.
 - (b) Ineffective Listeners Top 5 List: One list will be where you rank the 5 biggest downfalls of ineffective listeners. The issue you feel is the biggest problem should be ranked as number 1.
4. In addition to posting your lists, write a 1–2 paragraph (a minimum of three complete sentences per paragraph) summary of your research on the topic of how women and men listen differently. Does your research align closely or not closely with how you communicate? Why or why not?

Analysis of “The Bonus Check”

In the movie clip of “The Bonus Check” we were to view, we see Erin *seem to* overreact when she was being told that her bonus check would not be the figure that she and Ed had discussed previously. The discussion prompts us to discuss how *Erin* was ineffective in her listening to her boss, Ed, but I do not see that as the full case. In this scenario, Ed’s communication is *also off* due to his tone making the situation seem more dire than it was (Soderbergh, 2000). This was perhaps intentional, hence why Ed did not penalize Erin for her “outburst” as he began speaking by utilizing a somber tone. I, too, would have reacted in the way that Erin did (and then, feel completely embarrassed afterwards). Not being appreciated for the work that you do is something that hurts, as it rips away purpose from the menial tasks we do day-to-day.

Listening: What Does it Mean?

Personally, I would define listening as “providing one’s full, undivided attention, to another individual speaking” (or playing music). Listening is one of, if not *the* most important aspect when it comes in interpersonal communication and maintaining strong relationships (Bodie, 2012). There are many sources we can pull the definition of *listening* from, with almost all of them mentioning the importance and positive connotations that listening has behind it, while also citing that *understanding* is far more important than responding (Bodie, 2012, pp. 116).

The Styles of Listening

There are many *styles* of listening, and many of us may identify with more than one of them depending on the other individual we are speaking with or the present situation.

People-oriented listeners. People-oriented listeners prioritize addressing another person’s feelings over any other task that may be at hand (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 338).

Action-oriented listeners. Action-oriented listeners are those individuals whom listen best when information being given to them by the speaker is well-organized and lacks

any sort of “fluff” not needed to convey the information (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 338–339).

Content-oriented listeners. Content-oriented listeners are just that — focused on the substance of the other individual’s speaking (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 339).

Time-oriented listeners. A time-oriented listener is more concerned with timelines and deadlines than they are with the true *substance* of the message being conveyed to them (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 339–340).

Effective Listening Skills

The listening skills taken below were mainly sourced from Saylor Academy’s *Communication in the Real World* (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 330–345).

Empathy (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp.).

Active Listening (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp.).

Critical-Analysis (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp.).

Four (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp.).

Five (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp.).

Ineffective Listening Skills

Interruption (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 351–352).

Distorted Listening (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 352).

Eavesdropping (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 353–354).

Aggressive Listening (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 354–355).

Narcissistic Listening (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 355–356).

Pseudo Listening (*Communication in the Real World*, 2013, pp. 356–357)

The Differences of How Men and Women Listen

As an individual identifying as Gender Fluid I am not entirely sure how to speak to the differences between how men and women listen. I, like all of us, have had thousands of conversations with many different individuals identifying across the Gender Spectrum and every person listens in a different way, and I am not entirely convinced that it is entirely inherent on one's assigned Gender.

Perhaps the gender with which one was assigned at birth *could* influence prior experiences which would then be the thing that separates how one person listens differently than another. Many factors affect how we listen aside from gender, including personal traits as well as the surrounding atmosphere (Caspersz & Stasinska, [n.d.](#), pp. 6).

A Note on Self-Disclosure

It is important to note that self-disclosure is *never* on-sided. Once one person discloses information about themselves, the others around will react to it (agreeing with or disagreeing with what the person showed everyone about themselves) (*Communication in the Real World*, [2013](#), pp. 463)

Responses

Response 1

Listening is something that comes easier to me than talking. As I indicated by my goals, one of which is to be less concise, I do not often just volunteer information about myself. I prefer to listen to what others have been thinking about or learn more about them. I can relate to Erin because I would probably be wondering why I did not get the bonus that they had talked about, although instead of making a fuss about it I would probably have just checked out of the situation. Overall, the way Ed started the conversation, despite the fact he was trying to surprise her, would have caused anyone to be a bit upset. I do not really think that gender had anything to do with this situation and the reactions they had. It seems to me that this would have been more influenced by personality, not gender.

I believe that we can define listening as processing information or emotions from others. One article I read when studying effective and not effective listening skills, which talks about things effective listeners do states, “These behaviors include responses such as “uh huh” and “hmmm,” as well as other nonverbal behaviors including nodding, smiling, and adjusting one’s posture. Other active listening behaviors include asking questions, making eye contact, and not interrupting the speaker” (Fedesco, 2015). Asking questions can help you to not only better remember information, but also better understand it. That article goes on to say that the more you use those behaviors indicates how invested you are in a certain conversation. Another article I read makes this claim that being a good listening can offer, “A greater number of friends and social networks, improved self-esteem and confidence, higher grades at school and in academic work, and even better health and general well-being” (Listening Skills). This means that being a good listener can provide a large number of benefits. Being a good or bad listener would definitely affect your grades in school.

As I tried to find a difference between male and female in terms of listening, I did not find anything that indicated one listens better than the other. I read an

article which states, “Despite activating different activity centers within the brain, genders perform equally on measures of cognitive function. This means that although we listen and assimilate information differently, the difference does not appear to affect cognition or our ability to listen” (McCormick,2018). Therefore, our brains may function in a different way, but that does not indicate that either men or women listen better simply based on their gender. I would say my research aligns pretty well with how I communicate, with exception to the occasionally accidental interruption. Therefore, I would still classify myself as a good listener. I often ask questions, make eye contact, and am sympathetic to the person speaking.

Effective Listeners Top 5 List:

1. Asking questions
2. Making eye contact
3. Not interrupting
4. Smiling
5. Being polite

Ineffective Listeners Top 5 List

1. Interrupting
2. Looking away
3. Crossing their arms
4. Not reacting with smiles or frowns (not sympathetic)
5. Often changing the subject

This is a response to Thora Smith on Post ID 43465667. I completely agree with you on the side of how most *anyone* would be upset if being approached the same way Erin was prior to the “surprise/joke” about her bonus amount was realized. If my boss were to have come to me in a similar manner, I am sure I would have reacted in the exact same way as Erin did when she felt she was being valued by her company less than she was worth.

I also believe, like you do, that *asking questions* is an important part of being an effective listener in **any** scenario. I do have on question about this though (or rather, more a solicitation for advice) which maybe you can help me with. When a question regarding what someone is telling you comes into your head, do you ask it right away (thereby interrupting the speaker's conversational flow) or do you hold the question until after they are done speaking, when it may *no longer be relevant*? This is something I always have difficulty with. Sometimes my question is answered by the speaker by listening to the rest of the story, but sometimes it is not and when I bring it up again at the end of a conversation sometimes the other party does not even remember that far back into the conversation to answer! Incredibly frustrating on occassion, depending on the situation this occurs. What is your opinion on that matter?

References

Bodie, G. (2012). Listening as positive communication. *The positive side of interpersonal communication*, 109–125.

Caspersz, D., & Stasinska, A. (n.d.). Can we teach effective listening? an exploratory study, 15.

Communication in the real world. (2013). Saylor Academy.

Soderbergh, S. (2000). *Erin brockovich*.

Additional References

Bostrom, N. (2011). Rethinking conceptual approaches to the study of “listening”.

International Journal of Listening, 25, 10–26.

Business communication for success. (n.d.). Saylor Academy.

Cline, B. J. (2013). The science and sanity of listening [Num Pages: 13 Place: Concord, United States, Concord Publisher: Institute of General Semantics, Inc.]. *et Cetera; Concord*, 70(3), 247–259. Retrieved November 15, 2020, from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1470794568/abstract/4D34A8EBF8544B22PQ/3>

College success. (n.d.). Saylor Academy.

Scire, G. M. (2001). Breaking the sound barrier [Num Pages: 5 Place: Boston, United States, Boston Publisher: TCA EP World LLC]. *The Exceptional Parent; Boston*, 31(3), 62–66+. Retrieved November 15, 2020, from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/223497938/abstract/C4843D4E45EC40CFPQ/1>