

# Active Listening Skills Tips and Systems

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# Overview



Be present

Remove distractions

What isn't said (body language, eyes, tone)

Follow-up (with others, or private debrief)

And... what else?



# 5 Step System



## Listening to a foreign language

- Have the proper mindset
- Listen, read, speak (cross training to improve skills)
- Diversity (listen to a diverse set of materials and length)
- Guess first (based on situation/materials)
- Understand big ideas (don't get hung up on word choice, accents, etc.)



# 11 Steps to Become a Good Listener

Free ebook download\*

1

Be attentive

2

Do not look for something  
more interesting  
(over shoulder)

3

Do not check phone  
in the middle of  
the conversation

4

Don't (just) focus on getting  
your own words in

5

Use positive body language  
(lean forward, don't  
cross arms)

6

Don't hurry the other  
person, rather ask  
good questions

\* as long as the author keeps this link up

Caleb Storkey, <http://calebstorkey.com/listening-skills-11-steps-to-become-a-good-listener>



# 11 Steps to Become a Good Listener

Free ebook download\*

7

Approach the  
conversation without  
preconceived prejudice

8

Care about the person, or  
what they are saying

9

Find areas of agreement

10

Remember and  
follow-up

11

Respect confidentiality

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# Active Listening at a Conference



## What is the goal?

- You are going to present this to someone else, later
- Take notes (on computer, paper, or whatever)
- Notes should be high level (title, themes/topics)
- List high-impact messages (light bulb moments)
- List to-do action items
- What did other participants ask, how did they react?
- Debrief later: go through your notes and go deeper



# Active Listening on a Phone Call

What is the goal?



Turn off your email,  
don't surf the web



List names of participants and  
use those names on the call



Take notes, ask for clarification  
during the call



Summarize (out loud) the main  
points before you hang up



Clarify expectations (action  
items) of each party



Follow-up quickly through  
email with  
summary/expectations



# Active Listening on a Webinar



## What is the goal?

- Turn off your email, don't surf the web
- Ask relevant questions to the host/presenter
- Take notes and prepare to give a presentation to someone else
- Write your reactions to the information presented (emotions; do you agree; do you want more info)
- Debrief: what did you take away, what will you do differently now that you have this information





# Active Listening When You Are Accountable

What is the goal?

Make sure you write down, and clarify, every expectation of you (what do you need to do)

List due dates, and define scope of projects

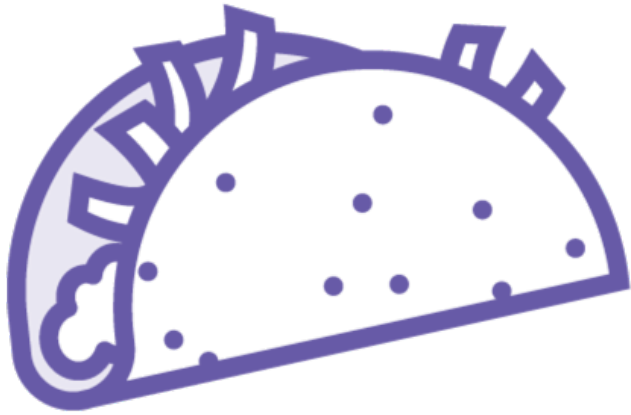
Understand who your main contacts are, and who you report back to (who are stakeholders?)

Exchange important contact information

Debrief with team (or boss) for clarity and to understand questions that still need answers



# Active Listening at a Restaurant



## What is the goal?

- If you have attention issues, sit facing the wall
- Otherwise, have your guests face the wall (not the TV)
- Take notes of the most important things, and follow-up items
- Stay off of your phone, but if you need to take notes or take a call, tell the other people that is what you are doing (manage expectations)
- Follow-up with email summarizing main points and any follow-up required of anyone at the meeting



# Summary



## Active Listening Tips and Systems

- 5 Steps (foreign language)
- 11 Steps
- Listening during various situations



Ready for more?

Look for listening skills in relationships (marriage, parenting teens, etc.), listening skills when learning another language, etc.



Next up:  
Helping others  
listen to you

