

# Developing Listening skills

## Unit 2

# Listening

- Receiver's Activity
- An Executive's communication time is spent approximately as follows
  - Writing – 9 %
  - Reading – 16 %
  - Speaking – 30 %
  - Listening – 45 %

# Listening

- Not just physical sensation of hearing
- It involves and engages complex activities and emotions

- **The first step is hearing to the speaker**
- If you can repeat the speakers words you have heard
- This step fails if there is
  - Lot of noise
  - Listener is occupied with something else

- **Second step is interpretation at the grammatical level**
- Depends on receiver's
  - Vocabulary
  - Knowledge of language
  - Experience
- If you fail to interpret the words correctly, the message is misunderstood

- **Third step is when the receiver evaluates what is heard and understood**
- In this stage you decide what to do with the received information
- E.g. whether you believe in what is heard or not

- **Last stage is response**
- Your response may be in words or in body language
- Response lets the speaker know whether the message is understood by the listener or not
- However feedback is not always given freely

# Forms of listening

- Listening is a intellectual and emotional activity
- Appreciative listening
  - Listening to music, poetry, shayari, etc
- Attentive Listening
  - Presentations, lectures, instructions
- Critical Listening
  - Sales talk, elocution contest, political speech



# Why listening is important



- To avoid communication errors
- Key to Success



# Difference between Hearing and Listening

- **Listening** and **hearing** are **not** the same
- **Hearing**: Hearing is With the **Senses**. Ears pick up sound waves which are then transported to your brain.
- **Listening**: Listening Is With the **Mind**. Communication process and, to be successful, is an active process.



# Effective Listening

- In effective listening, meaning and evaluation of a message must take place before a listener can respond to a speaker.
- Our thought speed is much faster than speech speed.



# Basic types of listening

- Selective
- Active
- Ignoring
- Empathetic





## ■ Selective Listening

1. Selective Portions
2. Topic may not be according to liking.

## ■ Active Listening

1. Understanding all things
2. Proper Interaction
3. Proper Feedback

## ■ Ignoring Listening

1. Not listening at all
2. Pretty insulting to other

## ■ Empathetic Listening

1. Most effective level
2. Arguing
3. Listening with mind and heart
4. Empathy is not sympathy

# Types of Listening

There are 5 main types of listening.

- Informative Listening
- Relationship Listening
- Appreciative Listening
- Critical Listening
- Discriminative Listening



# 1. Informative Listening

- Primary concern is to understand the message.

Daily life Examples:

- Lectures or instructions from teacher
- In the workplace, you listen to understand new practices or procedures.







# Ways to improve Informative Listening

- Vocabulary
  - Concentration
  - Memory
- 1- To recall experience
  - 2- To predict future
  - 3- To understand meanings of message



## 2. Relationship Listening



- It improves the relationship between people.
- Emphasis is on understanding the other person.
- 3 behaviors are key to effective relationship listening.
  1. Attending
  2. Supporting
  3. Empathizing

### 3. Appreciative Listening

Appreciative listening includes Listening to

- Music
- Speakers
- Your choices in theater, television, radio, or film.



# Quality of appreciative listening

- Presentation
- Perception
- Previous experience



## 4. Critical Listening

- Common part of our society
- It is essential in democracy
- Politicians
- Media
- Advocates of policies and procedures



## 5. Discriminative Listening

- Sensitive Persons
- Changes in the speaker's rate, volume, force, pitch, and emphasis, the discriminative listener can detect even nuances of difference in meaning
- It requires following skills
  1. Hearing ability
  2. Awareness of sound structure
  3. Integration of nonverbal cues

# Six steps of Effective listening





# How to Listen Well

- Face the speaker
- Maintain eye contact
- Minimize external distractions
- Respond appropriately
- Focus solely on what the speaker is saying
- Minimize internal distractions
- Keep an open mind
- Engage yourself





# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS – KEITH DAVIS

- Stop Talking.
- Put The Talker At Ease.
- Show Him That You Want To Listen.
- Remove Distractions.
- Empathize With Him.
- Be Patient.
- Hold Your Temper.
- Go Easy On Arguments And Criticism.
- Ask Questions.
- **Stop Talking!**

# Active listening

- Listening is a positive activity
- Listening not only involves understanding the content of the message but also to understand the feeling of the speaker
- Active Listening involves
  - Reflecting
  - Encouraging
  - Summarizing
  - Clarifying
  - Restating
  - Validating

# Reflecting

- Purpose
  - To show that you understand how the person feels.
- Action
  - Reflects the speaker's basic feelings.
- Example:
  - “You seem very upset.”

# Encouraging

- Purpose
  - To convey interest.
  - To encourage the other person to keep talking.
- Action
  - Don't agree or disagree.
  - Use neutral words.
  - Use varying voice intonations.
- Example
  - “Can you tell me more...?”

# Summarizing

- Purpose
  - To review progress.
  - To pull together important ideas and facts.
  - To establish a basis for further discussion.
- Action
  - Restate major ideas expressed, including feelings.
- Example
  - “These seem to be the key ideas you’ve expressed...”

# Clarifying

- Purpose
  - To help you clarify what is said.
  - To get more information.
  - To help the speaker see other points of view.
- Action
  - Ask questions.
  - Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further.
- Example
  - “When did this happen?”
  - “Do I have this right? You think he told you to give him the pencil because he doesn’t like you?”

# Restating

- Purpose
  - To show you are listening and understanding what is being said.
  - To help the speaker see other points of view.
- Action
  - Restate basic ideas and facts.
- Example
  - “So you would like your friends to include you at recess, is that right?”

# Validating

- Purpose
  - To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person.
- Action
  - Acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings.
  - Show appreciation for their efforts and actions.
- Example
  - “I truly appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter.”



# Cultivating good listening skills

- Listen to yourself!
  - Before you can be an effective listener you have to ensure you are ready to listen.
  - Assess your mental, physical and emotional states.
- Remember you are there to listen!
  - Many times people in crisis need to talk through their problems, not get advice on how to solve their problems.
  - If you aren't sure if the person wants you to “just” listen or give advice ASK them!

- Focus on the person's train of thought.
  - Avoid thinking about your response or other non-related things until the person is finished speaking.
- Remove distractions.
  - If there is a distraction (TV, music, someone else in the room) remove the distraction if possible so you can focus.
  - If you can't remove the distraction, schedule a time when you can focus on their concerns.

# Problems with Communication

- Identify problems you have understanding the person.
- If something is preventing you from understanding their concerns, don't be afraid to bring it out in the open.
  - Use phrases such as “Help me understand” or “Tell me more”
- If in a confrontational conversation, acknowledge the difficulty to get past the impasse.

# Silence & Body Language

- Silence isn't bad!
  - Don't always rush to fill in gaps in conversation. These gaps can be important for the individual to gather their thoughts or express themselves emotionally.
- Listen with your eyes!
  - People communicate information through behaviors in addition to what they say.
  - Pay attention to body language to help understand their feelings.

# Empathy

- Refrain from being judgmental.
  - Empathy doesn't mean you agree with the person, just that you have identified and understand how they are feeling.
- Uncomfortable conversations.
  - If you have difficulty keeping your beliefs from interfering with your ability to listen, let the person know the topic is too sensitive for you.
  - Find someone else that can listen.

# Convey You Are Listening

- Maintain eye contact when it seems appropriate.
- Use minimal encouragers such as “Uh huh” and “I see” to communicate you are paying attention.
- Paraphrase what the person has said to you and ask questions to fill in gaps.
  - This will not only help you understand, but help the person think through their concerns and express their emotions more effectively.
  - Acknowledge that you understand their thoughts as well as their feelings.

# Barriers to Effective Listening

## 1. Physiological Barriers:

### – *Hearing impairment*

- Some people suffer from hearing deficiencies

### – *Speaking-Thinking rate*

- The average processing speed of listeners is 500 words/minute while that of speaking is 125 words/minute
- This leaves a large time gap between a speaker and a listener
- Most listeners do is to let their mind wander to other activities or other unfinished tasks

## 2. Environmental Barriers

### – *Physical distractions*

- stuffy room, noisy machinery, parallel conversations etc.

### – *Message Overload*

- multifarious activities taking place simultaneously



### 3. Attitudinal Barriers

- ***Prejudices***

- Preconceived attitudes act as a barrier to effective listening.

- ***Preoccupation***

- Disturbing thoughts running parallel in one's mind

- ***Casual attitude***

- Very often, people adopt a casual attitude towards listening

- ***Egocentrism***

- The belief that one's thoughts are more important than others' ideas

## **4. Poor Listening Habits**

- *Faking attention***
- *Listening only for facts***
- *Avoiding difficult and uninteresting material***
- *Focusing on delivery***
- Lack of common experiences**

# Analysis of Poor Listening

- Being self centred
  - Listens selectively
  - Expects others to listen to them
  - Not willing to listen to what others have to say
- Planning a reply
  - Listener mind is preoccupied with what to say when the speaker stops
  - In arguing, miss out on rest of the speech

- Tendency to criticize
  - It is a negative attitude and cause of poor listening
  - Arises from narrow views, prejudice and unwillingness to see a different point of view
  - Criticizing the speaker's style, manner , appearance is showing self importance and disregard for others.

- Impatience
  - Lack of patience
  - Lack of maturity
- Emotional Blocks
  - To ignore and block out ideas that disturb their emotional comfort
  - Emotional excitement

# Good listener

- Making and maintaining good and comfortable eye contact
- Reflecting appropriate feelings in facial expressions
- Sitting / Standing in attentive position
- Tuning into speaker's line of thought
- Using empathetic questioning techniques
- Asking open ended question. Seeking information and clarification
- Summarizing what speaker said

# What Speaker should do to ensure proper listening

- **Try to empathize**
- **Adjust your delivery**
- **Utilize feedback**
- **Be clear**
- **Be interesting**

# Benefits of careful listening

- Listening enables us to gain work-related information
- Listening enables us to be more effective in interpersonal relationships
- Listening enables us to gather data to make sound decisions
- Listening enables us to respond appropriately to the communication messages we hear