**Role of Listening**

* To show interest
* To allow the other person to express themselves
* To show respect
* To find out information
* To ensure understanding
* To find out new ideas
* To build the relationship

**Give the speaker your full attention**

* focus on and encourage the speaker
* look and sound interested, and
* pay attention to nonverbal signals

**Techniques for active listening**

Reflect feeling:

* listen for the feelings behind the content
* check you've made the correct interpretation, and
* show you understand and empathize with the speaker

Paraphrase:

* identify the essential content only – check your grasp of facts, ideas, or opinions
* don't distract the speaker with unnecessary detail, and
* use your own words to prove you understand

Request more information:

* ask questions to clarify content or feelings, or to get more details
* use open-ended questions
* don't ask intrusive questions, and
* don't ask irrelevant questions

Summarize:

* evaluate and review the overall message, and
* summarize both content and feelings
* Listen to words being expressed - Internal distractions and External distractions. Paraphrasing what was said to demonstrate understanding

Good listening is active rather than passive. Learners need to know that you are interested in what they are saying and that you care about their questions and contributions. Consider the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **You should** | **Description** |
| *Avoid interrupting* | Even if there is a pause, be patient! |
| *Show Interest* | Listening noises: ‘mmm…’, ‘right…’, ‘I see...’  Use relaxed, open posture.  Keep good eye contact |
| *Be open-minded* | Don’t tune out things that conflict with personal biases. |
| *Check for understanding* | Summarise, repeat/reflect phrases back, paraphrase |
| *Empty your mind* | Focus on the speaker or situation, not on what you want to say. |
| *Listen for feelings not just facts* | Poor listeners tend to focus on facts only. |

**Listening Approaches**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Listening** | **How?** |
| ***Empathizing****:*  *Drawing out the speaker and getting information in a supportive, helpful way.* | Empathize by imagining yourself in the other person’s position, trying to understand what they are thinking and letting them feel comfortable – possible by relating to their emotional experiences. Pay close attention to what the person is saying, talk very little and use encouraging nods and words. |
| ***Analysing****:*  *Seeking concrete information and trying to disentangle fact from emotion.* | Use analytical questions to discover the reasons behind the speaker’s statements, especially if you need to understand a sequence of facts or thoughts. Ask questions carefully, so you can pick up clues from the answers and use the person’s responses to help you form your next set of questions. |

**Points to remember**

* Confidence is inspired in a speaker if you listen intently.
* What you are told should be regarded as trustworthy until proved otherwise.
* Misunderstandings are caused by wishful listening – hearing only what you want to hear.
* Constant interruptions can be very off-putting for people who find it difficult to get across their point of view
* Practice Acknowledging – Use of body – head nodding, eye contact, stop what you are doing, use of Uh ha! , ignore interruptions
* Don’t interrupt the speaker and allow them to finish – do not finish for them
* Summarize for understanding – summarize in your own words, do not repeat back
* Use of Silence - Style – People need to think, Force the answer, Ask a powerful question and be quiet

Listening is rarely taught and often not a conscious process. What are the things we need to practice around listening?

* 1. **Practice Acknowledging** – Use of body – head nodding, eye contact, stop what you are doing, use of Uh ha! , ignore interruptions
  2. **Don’t interrupt the speaker** and allow them to finish – do not finish for them
  3. **Summarize for understanding** – summarize in your own words, do not repeat back
  4. **Use of Silence** - Style – People need to think, Force the answer, Ask a powerful question and be quiet