

# BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

## COMMUNICATION SKILL: LISTENING

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## The Four Communication Skills



**Why Listening Is Important?**

**Hearing and Listening**

**Conscious Listening**

**Types of Listening**

**Active Listening**

**Receiving and Giving Feedback**





# Learning outcomes

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## Listening Skills

- Explain what we mean by listening skills
- Identify why listening skills are important, from a business communication perspective
- Identify key reasons why we often fail to listen effectively
- Adopt simple listening techniques to ensure that you listen effectively

# Why listening skills are important

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- Improves relationships
- Improves our knowledge
- Improves our understanding
- Prevents problems escalating
- Saves time and energy
- Can save money
- Leads to better results

# WHAT IS LISTENING?

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## Hearing

- Accidental
- Involuntary
- Effortless

## Listening

- Focused
- Voluntary
- Intentional

# Hearing

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To perceive  
sound via the ear



# Listening

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*To concentrate on hearing something; heed or pay attention to*

Collins English Dictionary

# Meaning of Listening

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- Listening is the process of enquiring into the other person's point of view, their ideas, their thinking.
  - Listening is with the mind
  - Hearing with senses
  - Listening is conscious
  - An active mind of eliciting information / message

# Conscious Listening

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSohjIYQI2A> Julian Treasure 5 Ways for Better Listening (8')

# Simple listening technique

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## 1. Listen

- Don't interrupt
- Let the speaker finish
- Concentrate on what is being said and how it is being said
- Make notes if this helps
- Show the speaker that you are listening



# Simple listening technique

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## 2. Question

→ Check understanding



# Simple listening technique

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## 3. Summarise

→ Paraphrase what the speaker has just told you



# Stages of the Listening Process

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- Hearing
- Focusing on the message
- Comprehending and interpreting
- Analyzing and Evaluating
- Responding
- Remembering

# Types of Listening

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## → Active listening

-occurs when both parties are present in a conversation and are hearing each other. Eye contact should be maintained by the listener.

## → Reflecting Listening

-allows the speaker to be heard by the listener repeating back exactly what he actually heard. Good for customer and sales service representatives.

## → Discriminative Listening

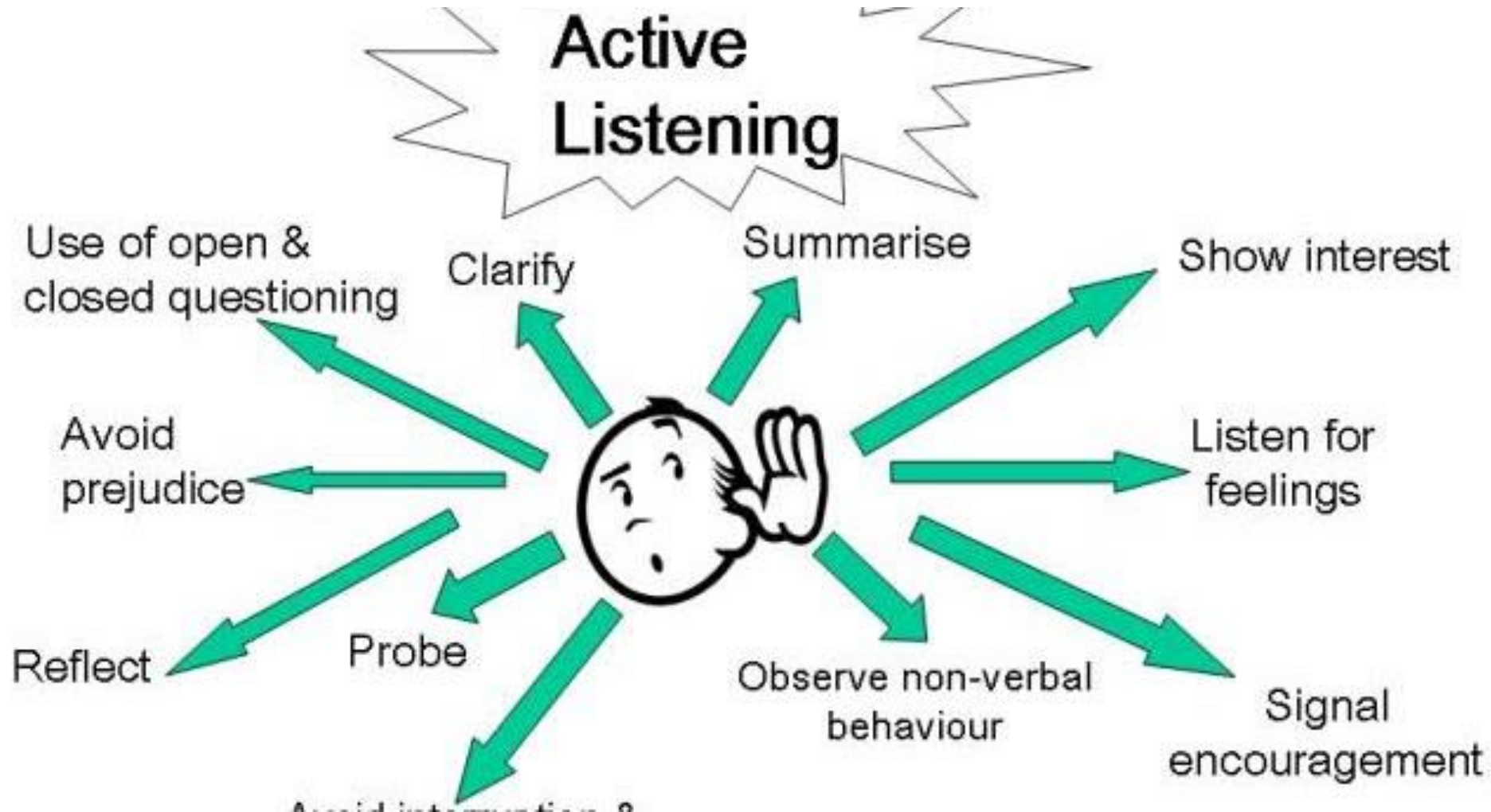
-it allows the listener to hear any underlying tones or emotions. Sales and customer service representatives

## → Evaluating listening

-the listener has to make judgments regarding the information he is hearing and weigh out pros and cons of the situation. Good for managers and entrepreneurs



# Active Listening Skills



# Active Listening

Alex Lyon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wUCyjiyXdg> Alex Lyon  
Active Listening Skills (6'13")



# Qualities of Active Listeners

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**Desire to be “other-directed”**

**No desire to protect yourself**

**Desire to imagine the  
experience of the other**

**Desire to understand, not  
critique**

# Reflecting

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- Purpose

- To show that you understand how the person feels.

- Action

- Reflects the speaker's basic feelings.

- Example:

- “You seem very upset.”



# Encouraging

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## → 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

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## → 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

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## → 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

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## → 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

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## → 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.”

# Ten steps for good Listening

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- Stop talking
- Paying attention
- Cultivating ease
- Show that you want to listen
- Remove any potential distractions
- Encourage
- Don't get mad; hold your temper
- Go easy on argument and criticism
- Ask quality questions
- Giving positive feedback

# Barriers to effective listening

## Listening Skills

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- Interrupting – knowing the answer
- Trying to be helpful
- Seeing discussion as competition
- Distraction - red flag words – emotional triggers
- Gap searching

# Barriers to Active Listening

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- Environmental barriers
- Psychological barriers
- Selective Listening
- Negative Listening Attitudes
- Personal Reactions
- Poor Motivation

# LISTENING AS A FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNICATION SKILL

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**Every good conversation starts with good listening.**

William Uri, The Power of Listening

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sy20gVJZRJ8>



# HOW TO GIVE AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK

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# Basic rules of feedback

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- Feedback is an **opportunity to recognise** performance and reinforce good behaviours.
- Feedback can **change a behaviour** that is considered to be negative.
- Giving feedback is **based on fact** and not a subjective judgement.



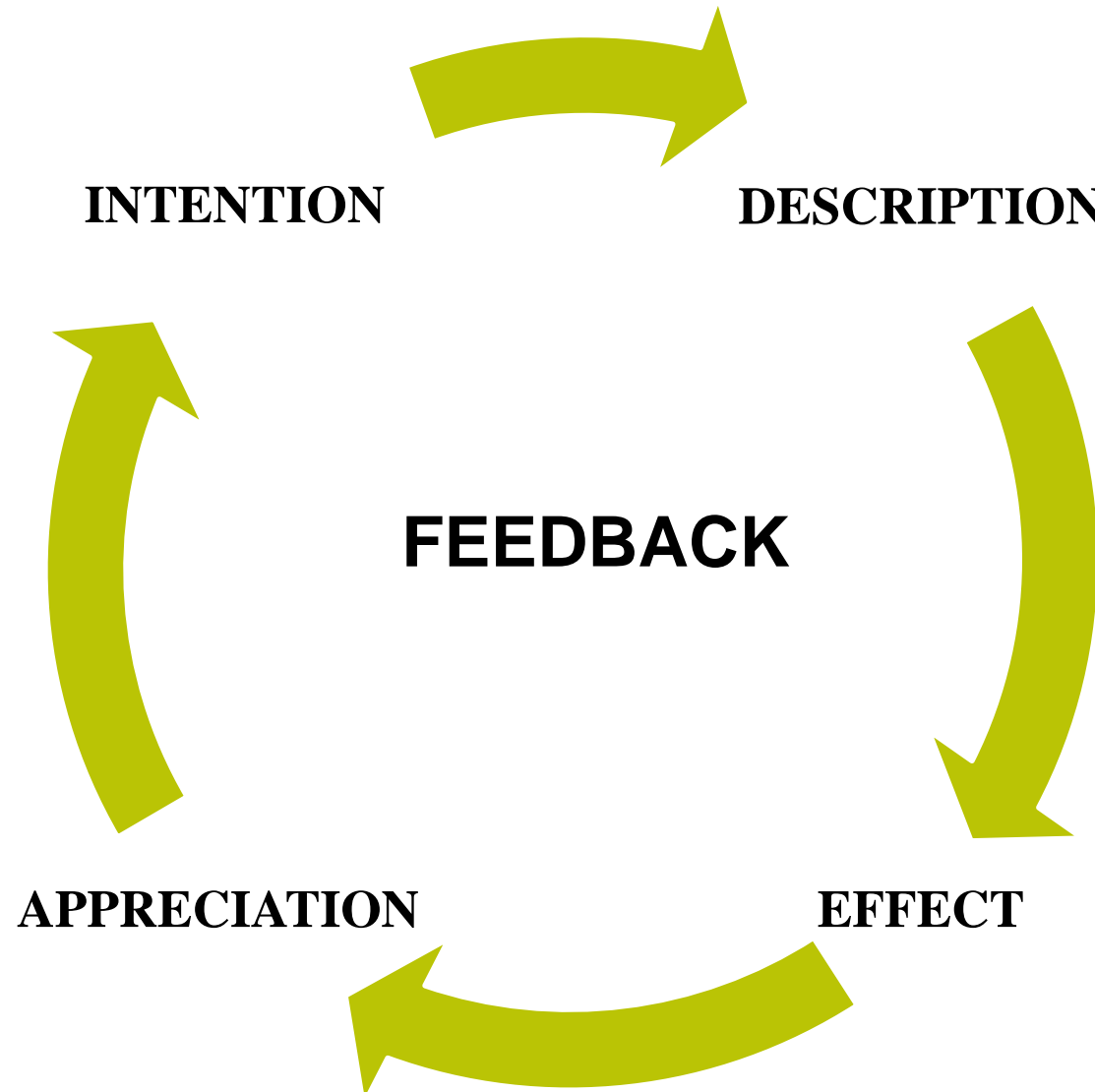
# Getting feedback right!

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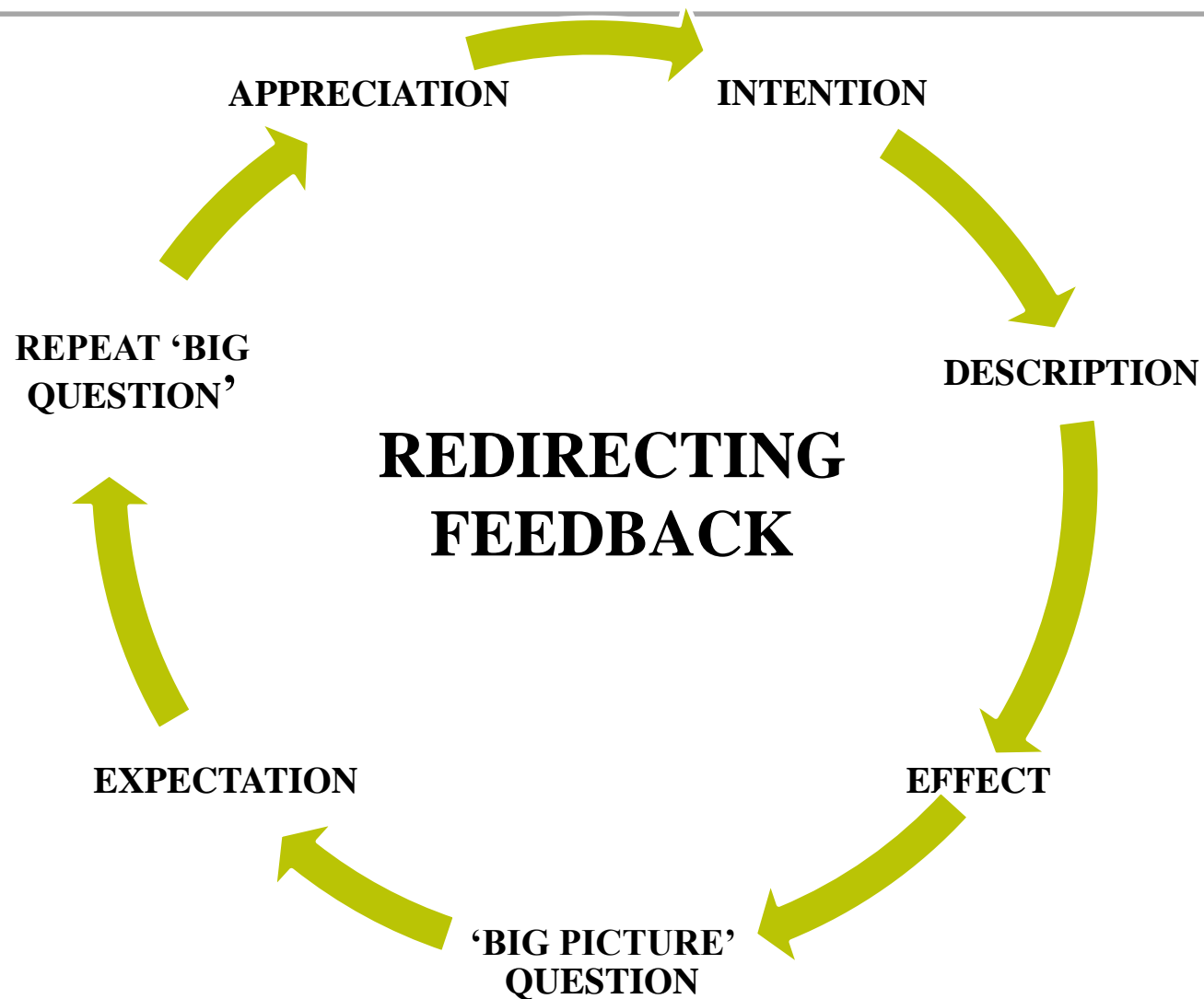
- Be proactive
- Be specific
- Link performance to team responsibilities
- Develop progress plan

# Reinforcing Feedback

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# Redirecting feedback



# What makes feedback valuable?

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## When it is provided –

- By someone with leadership responsibilities
- As an assessment against pre-established criteria
- Objectively, including both positive areas and areas for improvement
- To measure progress and providing an overview of a specific time period.
- To identify possible development or training needs
- In a timely manner

# Giving Feedback

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- **ASK**, don't tell
- **DESCRIBE**, don't judge
- **BEHAVIOUR**, not personality
- Be **CONSTRUCTIVE**
- Be **RESPECTFUL**

# Receiving Feedback

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**BE OPEN, NOT DEFENSIVE**



**LISTEN CAREFULLY**



**CLARIFY YOUR UNDERSTANDING**



**SEEK SUGGESTIONS FOR DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY**



**RECEIVE GOOD FEEDBACK AS A GIFT**