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HANOI UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Faculty of Education

SOFT SKILLS

Active Listening



CONTENTS

- 1. Great listeners**
- 2. Poor listeners**
- 3. Types of listening**
- 4. Active Listening**
- 5. Poll questions**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand what active listening is and how it differs from passive hearing.
2. Identify the key components of active listening, such as attention, feedback, and empathy.
3. Apply active listening techniques in real-life communication situations.

- Research shows that most of us speak at a rate of **125 words per minute**, but we can understand up to **400 words per minute**.
- What communication problems can happen because we think **faster** than someone can speak?

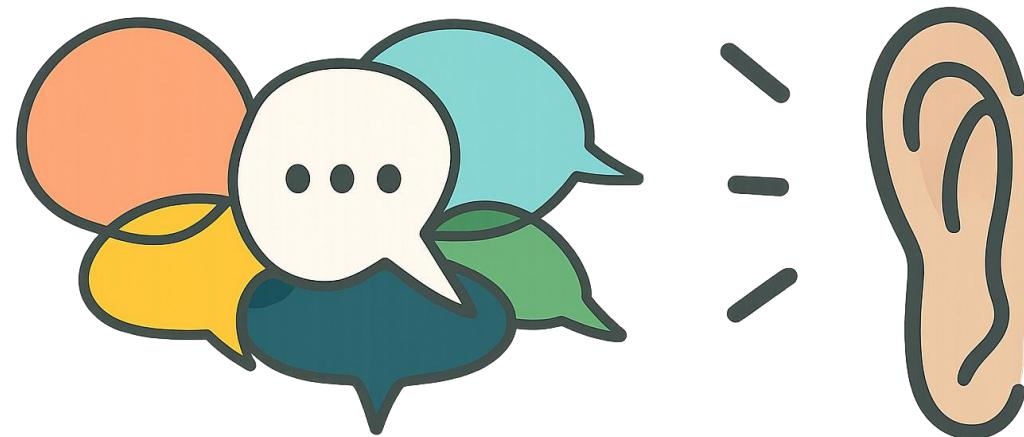


Image: Listening

Source: Illustration created using AI (DALL·E via ChatGPT – OpenAI).

1. GREAT LISTENERS

- Listening is a great skill. It builds **trust** and encourages problem solving but it takes practice.
- It's more complicated than you might think – Most people don't think about it – it is **second nature**.
- Good listening enables people to **tell their story**.

1. GREAT LISTENERS

- Research suggests that the way people deliver a message accounts for **93% of its meaning.**
 - Maintain good eye contact
 - Encourage people to talk
 - Reflect back what you hear
 - Don't interrupt.

'To help people think for themselves, first listen. And listen, then listen.'

Nancy Kline (1999) Time to think.

1. GREAT LISTENERS

The **SOLER** approach (Egan, 2002)

- **S**quarely face the person
- **O**pen posture
- **L**ean towards the person
- **E**ye contact
- **R**elax

In your everyday listening practise this approach and see what the effects are.

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1. GREAT LISTENERS

Not interrupting

- Give people time to say what they want to. Avoid interrupting or finishing their sentence for them. It sends the message that you are more important, you know what they are going to say or you are in a rush.

Time for reflection:

- *How do you know when someone is truly listening to you?*
- *How do you know when someone isn't listening to you?*

2. POOR LISTENERS



There are **blocks to effective listening**, be aware of these in yourself and in others.
poor listeners may demonstrate these behaviours:

- knowing the answer
- trying to be helpful
- trying to influence or impress
- making assumptions
- only hearing what you want to hear
- daydreaming
- being in a hurry
- looking for points to argue with
- feeling nervous or vulnerable

2. POOR LISTENERS

Negative listening habits to avoid:

- The FAKER: mind is elsewhere
- The INTERRUPTER
- The INTELLECTUAL or LOGICAL LISTENER: interprets and judges
- The HAPPY HOOKER: steals the focus
- The REBUTTAL maker: looking for a mistake, an argument or dismissal
- The ADVICE giver: can be good but can be a turn off

3. TYPES OF LISTENING

1

Reflexive listening

- This is what the listener hears in their own mind. It can lead to assumptions that are wrong.

2

External listening

- This is what the listener hears from the person, the words they say and how they say them – how they see things.

3

Intuitive listening

- This is what the listener feels about the person. He/she attends to the patterns and areas that are avoided.

4

Holding silence

Giving people time to think and then speak. This is hard to do – ‘hold your fire.’

4. ACTIVE LISTENING



Source: Illustration created using AI (DALL-E via ChatGPT – OpenAI).

- People like being listened to as it demonstrates respect. As a good listener you will show that you are **attentive** and that you are **interested in** what the speaker is saying.
- Resist the temptation to interrupt. Using **silence** gives the speaker space and time to think about, construct and say what they mean.
- People like being listened to as it demonstrates **respect**. As a good listener you will show that you are attentive and that you are interested in what the speaker is saying.

4. ACTIVE LISTENING

- The active listener will notice any misconceptions or prejudices there may be.
- The active listener will be skilful in reflecting back what the speaker has said.
- When you reflect back it enables the speaker to confirm or correct your understanding.
- Mirroring what the speaker has said and using the same words is very helpful.



A (Speaker):

"I'm really stressed about the deadline. There's so much to do and I don't think I can finish everything by Friday."



B (Listener - reflecting back):

"So you're feeling stressed because the workload is heavy and you're unsure if you can meet the Friday deadline?"



A (Confirming):

"Exactly! I just feel overwhelmed."

4. ACTIVE LISTENING

Some useful phrases for active listening

Confirming:

Let me confirm...

Can I make sure I understand what you've said..?

Can I just check?

Summarising:

Can I summarise what you've said please?

I think you said...

Checking:

Is that right?

Have I understood you correctly?

4. ACTIVE LISTENING

To summarise, good listening skills include:

- Paying attention: non-verbal, verbal and allowing people to finish, being aware of body language
- Checking understanding: paraphrasing, summarising, reflecting back the words.
- Allowing for silence: don't rush in or interrupt. Allow reflection to take place.
- Encourage exploration: "tell me more about that." Make it clear that you want to support the person in reflecting and understanding.

5. POLL QUESTION

Finish this phrase: “Active listening is more than just listening to the words. It’s about sensing the person’s emotions, noticing their body language and hearing the _____.”

- a) Hidden messages
- b) Complete message
- c) Message you want to hear



5. POLL QUESTION

Open-ended questions cannot be answered with a “yes” or “no.”

- a) True
- b) False



*Source: Illustration created using AI
(DALL·E via ChatGPT – OpenAI).*

5. POLL QUESTION

When asking questions, it's best to use what kind of tone?
Select all that apply.

- a) Distracted
- b) Inviting
- c) Argumentative
- d) Non-judgmental
- e) Sarcastic



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5. POLL QUESTION

When you're listening and asking relevant and thoughtful questions, people are more willing to share information and work with you to help find a solution.

- a) True
- b) False



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5. POLL QUESTION

If you respond to a person with verbal cues, such as “yes” or “uh-huh,” you are showing that you agree with the speaker.

- a) True
- b) False



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We have learned:

1. Active listening is more than just hearing – it means being **fully present**.
2. Good listeners show interest through **eye contact**, **body language**, and **thoughtful responses**.
3. Common **listening blocks** include interrupting, judging, and getting distracted.
4. **Key techniques**: paraphrasing, summarizing, and checking for understanding.
5. Active listening builds **trust**, **clarity**, and **deeper** human connection.

SOFT SKILL

Active Listening

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Presented by: Dr. Nguyen Thi Huyen





SOFT SKILL

Next Lesson:

Professional Communication Application

References:

- [1] Covey, S. R. (1989). *The 7 habits of highly effective people: Powerful lessons in personal change.* Free Press.
- [2] MDT Training (2017) 8 Ways You Can Improve Your Communication Skills. Available at: <https://www.otcbahrain.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Effective-Communication-Skills.pdf>