

LISTENING SKILL: IMPORTANCE & TYPE OF LISTENING

Listening is a Fundamental Aspect of Communicative Process and crucial for effective Communication. It is the process of receiving and interpreting the Spoken Words

Adults spend their 70% Working Time in some form of communication - Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing etc. Out of it, we spend 45% in Listening, 30% in Speaking, 16% in Reading & 9% in Writing.



Listening is the highest form of Interpersonal Communication.



STAGES OF LISTENING: Active Listening passes through 5 stages/steps: 1) Sensing 2) Recognizing 3) Interpreting 4) Responding 5) Memorizing

(I) SENSING/HEARING: Sensing means to get in tune with the Physical Hearing of the Speaker's Message. At this stage Simple Hearing takes place.

(II) RECOGNIZING/FILTERING: After hearing the physical sound, the receiver Identified/Recognizes/Filters the Pattern of sounds received through ears automatically.

(III) COMPREHENDING/INTERPRETING: Now at this stage Listener decodes/interpretes the sounds/words/ideas into Meaningful Understanding as per his/her own terms, received from the Speaker.

(IV) MEMORIZING/REMEMBERING: After hearing & Responding filtering, comprehending & evaluating the Speaker's Message, the Listener Memorizes for Future Use & References.

(V) RESPONDING: This is the Final Stage. Here at this stage Listener may reject the message or may Respond or give feedback.

✓ DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEARING & LISTENING.

Generally people treat Listening and Hearing as equal, though it is not true.

Though apparently, it seems as if two activities are same, but there is vast differences between Hearing & Listening, as follows:



HEARING

LISTENING

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| ① Meaning | ① <u>Hearing is just ability to receive sound / vibrations.</u> | ① Listening is done consciously involving <u>Attention, Concentration, & Understanding.</u> |
| ② Nature | ② <u>Primary & Continuous Process</u> | ② <u>Secondary & Temporary</u> |
| ③ What is it? | ③ <u>An Ability</u> | ③ <u>A Skill</u> |
| ④ Activity | ④ <u>Physiological</u> | ④ <u>Psychological</u> |
| ⑤ Involvement | ⑤ <u>Receiving of Message through Ears Only.</u> | ⑤ <u>Receiving through Ears & Interpretation of Message.</u> |
| ⑥ Occurrence | ⑥ <u>Subconscious level / Involuntary</u> | ⑥ <u>Conscious level / Voluntary</u> |
| ⑦ Use of Sense | ⑦ <u>One</u> | ⑦ <u>More than One</u> |
| ⑧ Reason | ⑧ <u>Neither Aware, nor Any Control over the Sounds one hears</u> | ⑧ <u>Listen to Receive Information & Acquire Knowledge</u> |
| ⑨ Process | ⑨ <u>Passive Physical Process</u> | ⑨ <u>Active Mental Process</u> |
| ⑩ Concentration | ⑩ <u>Not Required</u> | ⑩ <u>Absolutely Required.</u> |
| (11) | | |

Hearing is ability to hear i.e. Natural or God given. Whereas Listening requires Attention, Concentration, which one consciously / voluntarily choose to do, so that the brain is able to process & interpret the meaning, remember and if situation demands respond.

Listening is Acquired Skill performed intentionally where one is selective to pay Attention.

TYPES OF LISTENING: As Hearing involves only ⁽³⁾ Ears, but Listening involves Eyes, Senses, Mind, Heart & Imagination, in addition to ears.

There are various Types of Listening:

- (1) Active Listening (2) Appreciative listening (3) Empathetic Listening (4) Content Listening (5) CRITICAL LISTENING (6) INTUITIVE LISTENING.

(1) ACTIVE / ATTENTIVE LISTENING: Active Listening demands the complete Attention, Understanding & Response of the Listener. It is intelligent Listening, interactive & productive as in Group Discussions, Meetings, Job Interview etc.

- i) Understand beyond the words of speaker.
- ii) Understand the speaker's point of view - Central Idea, Main points, Supporting Details, Examples & Illustrations.
- iii) Acknowledge the speaker's emotions & feelings.

Example: Boss at the workplace, instructing the sub-ordinate to complete a specific task, requires Active or Attentive Listening.

(2) APPRECIATIVE LISTENING: The main purpose of Appreciative Listening is to get pleasure & enjoyment. Appreciative Listening takes place with whom one enjoys spending time — Example - Listening to Music, Watching TV, Movies, Listening to Entertaining Stories, Jokes.

In these situations, one is engaged in Appreciative Listening, only because one appreciates the Lyrics, Direction, Melody, Style, or Dialogue Delivery etc.

Appreciative Listening is for Pleasure/Enjoyment only.

(3) EMPATHETIC LISTENING: When one listens to a distressed person with emotional turmoil, who wants to share feelings to provide emotional or moral support or sense of compassion, is called Empathetic Listening.

This is also known as Therapeutic/Relationship Listening as it is used in times of emotional breakdown or Crisis. When one listens to the problems of others, one adopts Empathetic listening.

Example: i) Getting the news of death of friend's father from the friend.

n) Counsellors, Doctors, Psychiatrists always use Empathetic listening in their professions.

✓ (4) CONTENT LISTENING: It is known as Informative Listening, while listening to Reports, Briefings, Instructions, Speeches, Conversations to gather required information.

- i) Requires Minimum Listening
- ii) Mainly used
- iii) Task-related Performances
- iv) Remembers only Key points
- v) Focus is on Understanding Speaker's Message

✓ (5) CRITICAL LISTENING: This is also called Analytical Listening. The purpose of Critical Listening is two fold —

- i) Understand to Evaluate the Message
- ii) Give Critical Judgement about the Message

Basically Critical Listening aims at —

- i) Analyse the Speaker's Message
- ii) Evaluate the Strength & Weakness of Argument
- iii) Verify the basis of Accuracy of Facts & Evidence
- iv) Ultimately to form a Separate Personal opinion.

✓ (6) INTUITIVE LISTENING: Intuition is the Sixth Sense, is the Power above Reason. In case of an Intuitive Listener, a mere hint, an Undertone, or a Silence is enough to read the other person's mind.

Ex: A Good Mother knows a child's mood by intuitive listening.

✓ IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING: In today's high-tech, globalized world, Inter Personal Communication has become more indispensable than ever. Active and attentive Listening helps the individuals to grow up and achieve success in the Social and Professional set up in many ways:

1. It helps to build effective Relationships in the General, Social Circle and Business/Professional Organisations.
2. It ensures Better Understandings between Employer & Employees, Employees with Boss & Fellow beings in the Society.
3. It helps in solving numerous Problems.
4. It resolves Conflicts and Misunderstandings.
5. It improves levels of Accuracy and reduces committing errors.
6. It promotes useful Time Management in avoiding wastage of Time.
7. It helps in building Resourceful, Self-Reliant individuals in the Society & Workplaces.
8. It bridges proper friendship.
9. It promotes better career options.
10. It helps in Sharing Emotions, Ideas, Experience.
11. It promotes effective Decision-making process.
12. Good Listeners are always Performers - Good Writers & effective Speakers.
13. Listening provides the main basis of Understanding and Comprehension.

RULES FOR ATTENTIVE LISTENING / DO'S & DON'TS OF LISTENING

1. Stop Talking while Listening.
2. Concentrate on what the Speaker is Speaking.
3. Maintain Proper Eye-Contact with the Speaker.
4. Nod & Smile at appropriate times.
5. Don't Argue with the Speaker.
6. Leave your Emotions behind.
7. Avoid Hasty Judgements & Criticism.
8. Ask Questions whenever Required.
9. Avoid your own Biases & Prejudices.
10. Be Cool & Patient.
11. Hold your Temper in Control.
12. Use Verbal & Non-Verbal Cues with Speaker.
13. Be Objective.
14. Give Feedback.
15. Minimise Distractions.
16. Keep an Open Mind.

BARRIERS OF LISTENING: In order to increase the effectiveness of listening, one should identify and eliminate the listening barriers.

- (1) Physical Barriers
- (2) Environmental Barriers
- (3) Psychological Barriers
- (4) Linguistic Barriers
- (5) Perceptual Barriers
- (6) Biases & Prejudices
- (7) Distractions
- (8) Fear
- (9) Overload of Messages
- (10) Lack of Appropriate focus
- (11) Premature Judgement
- (12) Excessive Talking
- (13) Poor Memory
- (14) Cultural Barriers.

In order to be an Active Listener, one has to pay special attention, concentration to intensive and extensive listening and has to master the listening skills.