Active listening

New Literacy Set

Erasmus+ Project, 2015-2017

Communication literacy
“We have two ears but only one mouth. Some people suggest that’s because we should spend twice as much time listening as opposed to talking. Others suggest it’s because listening is twice as hard” – Author Unknown
Communication

What’s the difference between **HEARING** and **LISTENING**?

*Hearing* is an innate ability

*Listening* is an ability that must be learned and developed and implies a conscious effort and attention
Communication is:

**Content**
what is being said

**Channels**
the means of conveying content

**Interpersonal factors**
emotions and the pattern of interaction

**Context**
setting and circumstances
Research shows that in communication only 7% is delivered by words, 25-20% remembered. 38% is delivered by vocal variety (tonality, volume, rhythm), and 55% is delivered by body language.
Any message has two components: the content and the attitude underlying the content.

Effective communication requires not only paying attention to what you say but also to how you say it.

“Actions speak louder than words”

Good communication not only requires talking but also listening.
What is active listening?

• it’s a communication skill based on empathy
• it implies sharing with the others
• creating positive and supportive relationships
• using one’s ears and eyes
Becoming an Active Listener

1. Pay attention
2. Show that you’re listening
3. Provide feedback
4. Defer judgment
5. Respond appropriately
1. Pay attention

- Look at the speaker directly.
- Put aside distracting thoughts.
- Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors. For example, side conversations.
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
2. Show that you’re listening

• Nod occasionally.
• Smile and use other facial expressions.
• Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
• Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh huh.
3. Provide feedback

• Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is," and "Sounds like you are saying," are great ways to reflect back.

• Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say." "Is this what you mean?"

• Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.
4. Defer judgment

• Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.
• Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions.
• Don't interrupt with counter arguments.
5. Respond appropriately

- Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.
  - Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
  - Assert your opinions respectfully.
  - Treat the other person in a way that you think he or she would want to be treated.
Attentive Listening

- limits the risk of misunderstandings
- tends to open the interlocutor up
- creates an atmosphere of trust and respect
- increases self-esteem and self-confidence
Active listening is a physical and psychological process that involves:

- **Listening to what is being said (words)**

- **Listening to what is not being said (what is behind words, pauses included)**

- **Staying focused on how the message is conveyed (any body language cues)**
Empathic listening

Empathic listening is about understanding the views and feelings of the speaking person trying to ‘put yourself in the speaker’s shoes’

However it is not about agreeing, making judgements, offering advice
Ineffective listening

Passive listening: listening without reacting or filtering what is perceived to be of key importance, becoming easily distracted, just faking attention, having preconceived ideas
Barriers to listening

- **Verbal factors:** content too difficult/boring, poorly delivered, interruptions
- **Environmental factors** such as the light or the temperature of the room, noises, distracting movements, smells
- **Personal factors:** feeling physically unwell, stress, thinking about personal problems, preconceived opinions, biases, defensiveness
Barriers to listening

- preconceived opinions/assumptions, biases,
- defensiveness,
- jumping to conclusions
Active listening in short

https://youtu.be/t2z9mdXij4A
KEEP CALM AND USE ACTIVE LISTENING