

Handout Five

Listening

I. _____ and _____ are not the same thing.

A. Listening occurs when the brain reconstructs electrochemical impulses into a representation of the original sound and gives them meaning.

B. Listening requires _____, _____, _____, and _____.

C. _____ _____ is the degree of congruence between what a listener understands and what the sender was attempting to communicate.

D. Listening is not a natural process where all listeners receive the same message.

E. _____ _____ requires effort whereas _____ _____ is passive with low-level processing of information.

II. There are several faulty listening behaviors we all possess.

A. _____ is to imitate the real thing; _____ _____ responds only to a part of the message.

B. _____ _____ turns innocent remarks into attacks and _____ collects information in order to attack back.

C. _____ listeners avoid and _____ listeners are unable to look beyond the words and take things at face value.

D. _____ _____ takes place when listeners turn all conversations onto themselves.

III. The causes of poor listening are many.

A. Message overload, rapid thought, and psychological and physical noise are some reasons for poor listening.

B. Other reasons are hearing problems, faulty assumptions, talking has more advantages, cultural differences, and media influences.

IV. There are a number of reasons people invest effort into listening.

A. _____-_____ _____ aims to be _____ _____ by looking for key ideas, asking questions, _____, and taking notes.

B. _____ aims at emotional connections by taking the time to listen for unexpressed thoughts and feelings and encouraging further comments.

C. _____ aims to enhance the relationship and understand the message. This is done by listening before evaluating, separating the message from the speaker, and searching for value.

D. Applying analytical listening to see if a message stands up to scrutiny is one element of _____. The goal here is to examine the speaker’s evidence and reasoning, gauge the speaker’s credibility, and examine the emotional appeals being employed.

V. _____ is aimed to help the speaker deal with personal dilemmas.

A. While this has grown into an industry of its own with counseling and advice for medical conditions, eating disorders, sexual orientation, divorce, shyness, addition, loneliness, safety, and exercise there is also the online anonymity support avenues prompting faster revelations in a shorter period of time.

B. Generally speaking, women are more likely than men to give supportive responses when presented with another person’s problems.

C. Supportive responses come in the form of _____, judging, _____, _____, _____, and reflecting.

D. Before committing, be sure your support is welcomed. You should evaluate the situation, the other person, and your own strengths and weaknesses.

Word Bank

- advising
- analytical listening
- attending
- critical listening
- hearing
- insensitive
- listening
- mindful listening
- paraphrasing
- pseudolistening
- relational listening
- responding
- stage hogging
- task-oriented listening
- ambushing
- analyzing
- comforting
- defensive listening
- informational listening
- insulated
- listening fidelity
- mindless listening
- prompting
- questioning
- remembering
- selective listening
- supportive listening
- understanding

Homework:

This assignment is an attempt to increase your awareness of your listening effectiveness and efficiency. You are to explore your listening behavior and experiences through several daily/weekly journal entries. Each entry should consist of at least one typed page for a total of five double-spaced typed pages. Select one of the following for each journal entry.

- ❖ Keep a listening log for one week. Keep track of the amount of time you spend each day listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Determine the percentage of time you spend during waking hours at each of the different communicative activities.
- ❖ Keep a distraction log for one full day. Keep track of each instance that your attention strays. Identify the topic and situation from which it strayed and the subject that it strayed to. Can you identify any commonalities or clues to the cause of your being distracted?
- ❖ What examples of ineffective listening have you experienced in the past week? Describe these examples. What could have been done to avoid these situations?
- ❖ Discuss the ways that more effective listening could be beneficial to you. This could include on the job, in school, at home, or with friends.
- ❖ Think of a person you believe is a good listener. How do you feel when you are talking to this person? How do you think this person's behavior impacts your perceptions of him or her? How do your listening behaviors compare?
- ❖ Discuss your listening weaknesses and strengths. Compile a list of those items you could improve to become a better listener.
- ❖ Have you ever found yourself listening defensively? How could you control this behavior and listen more open-mindedly?
- ❖ How often do you find yourself interrupting another person before you have completely listened to him or her? Do certain topics or people cause you to interrupt more often? How might you control this?
- ❖ What experiences have you had that affect your ability to listen effectively? Are there words that cause you to react overly emotionally because of these experiences? What are they?
- ❖ What barriers and distractions have you noticed that keep you from listening effectively? Include both internal and external examples. What might be done to combat these?
- ❖ Locate a quiet room or area free from noticeable distractions or interruptions. Make yourself comfortable. Close your eyes and relax. Focus all of your attention and energy upon listening to your environment. Do this for at least 20 minutes. Describe the experience.
- ❖ Go to a busy public place such as a mall or restaurant. Close your eyes for a few minutes and try to listen to everything that is going on around you. Now listen only to one specific sound, such as a person's voice, a baby crying, or music playing. What did you notice? How did your listening differ in the two listening situations?

- ❖ Discuss how a person's gender might impact his or her ability to listen. Include social and biological factors. Provide personal examples to support your observations.
- ❖ How does the media impact listening? Include the types of programming available today, and their styles of presentation (e.g., short segments like news segments and commercials). How do these factors impact your attention and ability to focus on everyday messages?
- ❖ Watch a talk show with a highly emotional subject. Identify examples of ineffectual listening. What caused the individuals to lose their ability to listen? Was there any way the host could have encouraged better listening?
- ❖ Interview a person working in your chosen profession about the role listening plays on the job. Discuss the importance of listening in his or her career and the consequences of poor listening. Also, ask about the amount of listening training the interviewee has received.
- ❖ Over a period of several days, identify different purposes for listening that you experience. How did your listening behavior differ for each purpose?
- ❖ Observe a conversation between two or more people. Identify the ways in which each person nonverbally communicates that he or she is listening to the other person. Discuss the importance of these behaviors and their impact on the conversation.
- ❖ As you listen to a classroom lecture, sermon, or workplace briefing, what organizational patterns can you identify? What clues help you to identify what pattern is being used? How do these patterns impact your listening?