

Characteristics of Effective Listening - An Essential for Good Communication

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ABSTRACT:

To begin, the three parts of hearing, language, and speaking are closely connected abilities that are picked up instinctively by everyone from birth to allow engagement and communication with the larger community. Listening is the capacity to correctly hear and evaluate signals during the communication process. Listening is a crucial component of good communication. The messages are readily misconstrued if the listener is unable to listen effectively. As a consequence, communication may break down, and the message sender may grow upset or dissatisfied with you.

If there is only one communication skill that you should strive to develop, it is listening. Because listening is so crucial, many top firms offer listening skills training to their workers on the job. This isn't unexpected, given that effective listening skills may lead to higher customer satisfaction, enhanced productivity with fewer errors, and increased information exchange, all of which can lead to more creative and imaginative work.

Many great leaders and entrepreneurs attribute their success to their ability to listen well. "Listening as one of the primary causes behind Virgin's success," says Richard Branson regularly. All strong human interactions are built on the foundation of effective listening.

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Spend some time thinking about how to improve your listening abilities, as they are the foundation of one's success.

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I. LISTENING VS. HEARING

The noises that enter your ears unintentionally are referred to as hearing. It's a physical procedure that ensures you don't have any hearing issues, which occurs automatically.

Listening, without a doubt, needs more than that: it necessitates considerable concentration and effort, combining both mental and physical processes.

Listening entails paying attention not just to the narrative itself, but also to how it is conveyed, the use of language and voice, and the other person's body language. To put it another way, it implies being aware of both verbal and non-verbal cues. The degree to which you notice and grasp these information determines your capacity to listen properly. Listening is not a passive activity. In reality, the listener may and should be just as engaged in the process as the speaker. The term "active listening" is used to describe the state of being completely occupied.

Most individuals don't listen as well as they believe they do, and they're usually unaware of it. While most individuals think that listening is an essential ability, few feel compelled to improve their listening abilities.

Listening is thought to be the first communication skill learned, the most often utilised, yet the most difficult to perfect.

Researchers usually categorise listeners into three or four distinct sorts or degrees. All methods distinguish listeners in somewhat different ways, but they all provide a

continuum from non-listeners to very profound listeners.

II. THE MAJOR ROLE OF LISTENING

When you consider that individuals spend roughly 45 percent of their time communicating, it's not difficult to see the importance of listening skills. This is more important than speaking, accounting for 30% of the total, while reading and writing account for 16% and 9%, respectively.

Active listening in the coaching area entails watching both the client and oneself. Listening to the client's words, tone, and body language, as well as every other component of interpersonal communications, can help you develop a complete picture of what they are saying and what they are not saying. The second part of active listening requires a self-aware coach who is aware of his or her own filters, thoughts, and reactions, and who does not allow them to influence the overall understanding of what the client is saying, as well as what the client may be thinking, feeling, and/or not saying; in this sense, active listening is a way to demonstrate authenticity.

Despite its significance, students and even professors frequently fail to pay attention to listening when it is required. This is particularly noteworthy because learners frequently state that listening is the most difficult of all the English language abilities. Listening, as opposed to hearing, is an active activity in which we listen to what is said and then try to grasp what is stated. And the real scientific method of hearing consists of the following steps:

Listening as opposed to hearing is an active process where we hear and then understand

what is said. The actual process of listening takes several steps:

1. Sound waves transport the sound of uttered words to the ears of the listener.
2. These sound waves must be able to pass freely from the outer ear canals.
3. The sound waves then travel through the eardrums and the middle ear without any distortions induced by fluid from colds, infections, or allergies.
4. The sound waves must next pass via the inner ear, which must likewise be functional.
5. The sound waves then pass to the brain via the auditory nerves.
6. Finally, in order to comprehend the message received, the brain compares the incoming sound waves to its previously stored recollection of sounds.

If the brain is unable to do so, the person has a listening problem. For example, if the brain is unable to focus on the task of listening to someone for an extended period of time, the person is most likely suffering from an auditory memory difficulty. An attention deficit problem can occur when the brain is working on too many things at once and hence is unable to focus on interpreting sound waves received and thus is unable to grasp the message. If the brain cannot or has difficulties storing information, it will be unable to interpret the sound waves it receives, and we can deduce that the brain is suffering from auditory comprehension or auditory processing problems. These are only a handful of the many different types of hearing problems.

Children may struggle with language and speaking if they do not have a strong foundation and growth in their listening abilities; they are also more likely to fail in

school. It is believed that a youngster learns 80% of what he or she learns by listening. It is the most basic language skill that most children acquire, and it serves as the foundation for all other language abilities. Listening as a natural partner to spoken or written language skills is extremely crucial for the development of literacy skills as a whole. Even taking the significance of listening into consideration, the teaching of listening as a talent that can be gained on its own merits has become something of a lost art, and this has been the case for more than 50 years, particularly in primary schools. Many teachers believe that listening is not something that can be taught or assessed, which is one of the reasons why it appears to be tough.

The body, as well as the brain, must be prepared for learning in order to improve our listening abilities. Listening is also a skill that has to be emphasised and concentrated on because it is so important in helping youngsters learn to read and spell. Listening strategies should be used at the start of the year to create the groundwork for future growth. For example, if teachers were asked to repeat their instructions one less time than they currently do, and as a result of improved listening skills, the class' productivity would increase in a variety of ways, particularly in terms of speech and literacy – as well as the other elements of the triad of language skills.

III.LISTENING CHALLENGES FOR OUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Many people have difficulty comprehending a discussion, lecture, or conversation in a second language, or even in their own tongue. All of these challenges might be caused by the speaker, the setting, or the listener.

The speaker's rapid speech, background noise, a lack of visual cues, such as on the phone, the listener's restricted vocabulary, a lack of expertise about the issue, and an inability to discern individual sounds are all possible contributors.

This discussion on the significance of listening skills might create an extra degree of pressure on public speakers. After all, it's tough to imagine trying to persuade an audience to not just hear, but also to actually listen to a speaker. Nonetheless, once you've recognised the difference and become aware of the hurdles to active listening, you'll be able to overcome them. Our spoken words may be better shaped to mesmerise and engage an audience. As a public speaker, the most powerful weapon you have is a greater understanding of the value of good listening. At the same time, improving one's own effective listening abilities may help you succeed academically, professionally, and personally. Being heard is one thing, but to complete the communication field, all speakers require listeners. Reap the benefits: Try stating "I'm listening" instead of "I hear you."

IV. WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT FOR PEOPLE TO BECOME ACTIVE LISTENERS?

Active listening is a difficult talent to master. It may necessitate a shift in basic attitudes. People must be really interested in the speaker in order to be good at active listening. Developing a genuine interest in the speaker is consequently a difficult endeavour. It can only be created by being prepared to take a chance on seeing the world through the eyes of the speaker.

Active listening entails a significant amount of personal risk. Listeners risk being altered if they are able to do what is stated here: genuinely perceive another person's feelings, comprehend the meaning of his experiences for him, and see the world as he sees it. It threatens the listener's belief system, even if only for a little while, and forces them to think in someone else's terms. To be able to risk them in order to comprehend another demands a great lot of inner security and fortitude.

It is exceedingly difficult to break free from the urge to see things in specific ways because people have become so accustomed to seeing themselves in certain ways (seeing and hearing just what they want to see and hear). It may be uncomfortable at times, but it is far more difficult than unpleasant.

The inherent desire to judge from the listener's point of view and accept or disapprove of what another person is saying, according to Carl Rogers, is the most significant impediment to effective interpersonal communication. This, he believed, was especially true when the subject included intense emotions.

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