



The Leadership Institute

Lighting the Way

COMMUNICATING THROUGH LISTENING

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The power and seduction of listening

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The Leadership Institute

Lighting the Way

"Inspiring Dreams, Realizing Potential"

TLI105;3/25/08;JDH

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW



1. WELCOME

2. OVERVIEW

Definition of Effective Listening:

*"To be completely committed to listening to the entire message of the speaker **before** you begin to formulate your response."*

- Rob Zarrilli

Why listen effectively?

- Listening is one of the absolute, must develop, skills of a leader and all it really requires is some basic skills.
- Studies show that we listen at about a 25% capacity; Can you afford to forget or distort 75% of what is happening around you?
- Even if we devote our full attention to listening, we cannot maintain 100% capacity for very long.
- At 100% the message we are listening to must be urgent to sustain our full attention.
- Lazy listening can be costly personally and professionally.

Today's Listening Topics:

- A. How good listening skills improve morale and PROFITS
- B. The 3 Types of Listeners
- C. The 4 Key elements of good listening
 - *Hearing the message*
 - *Interpreting the message*
 - *Evaluating the message*
 - *Responding to the message*

**FOCUSED
LISTENING IS
GOOD
BUSINESS!**



3. HOW FOCUSED LISTENING AFFECTS YOUR PROFITS AND EMPLOYEES

In business, listening builds on itself....

Effective listening lays the foundation for clear understanding



Clear understanding allows an appropriate response



An appropriate response facilitates high quality communication



High quality communication promotes organizational cooperation



Organizational cooperation improves employee morale



High morale increases job commitment



Job commitment leads to peak productivity



High commitment develops the desire to work more effectively and within a team... which leads to a desire to listen productively



Listening = Good Business

Individual and team success are greatly influenced by the quality of relationships and the communication that takes place.

Companies thrive when team members are good listeners.

Listening helps employees...

- ✓ *Understand problems*
- ✓ *Collect important information*
- ✓ *Clarify procedure*
- ✓ *Build Relations*

Good communication will enhance trust and respect and eliminate road blocks.

WHY ARE
SALESPeOPLE
SUCH POOR
LISTENERS?



4. SO, IF LISTENING IS SUCH A GOOD THING, WHY ARE WE, AS SALES PEOPLE, OFTEN SUCH POOR LISTENERS?

Ego : As sales people, we need to have a great deal of confidence—both in ourselves and our product. All too often, our ego stands in the way of relating to the other person.

"Big egos have little ears." — Robert Schuller

Focus: Our focus in the sales relationship is to sell, sell, sell. Our mind tends to think only of making the sale—and not on the conversation at hand.



Hearing vs. Listening: We may also at times mistake hearing for listening.

Hearing is the physical act of a sound entering our ear. Our brain registers that a sound has occurred.

Listening, however, is the process that happens after the sound has entered our ears. When our brains react to the sound, that is the act of listening.

For example, if I'm in the woods and the sound of a gunshot enters my ear, that is hearing. When I duck for cover in response to that sound, that is listening.

Hearing is the physical reaction whereas listening is the mental reaction to sound.

3 TYPES OF LISTENERS

QUIET & PASSIVE

FALSE COMMUNICATOR

ACTIVE LISTENER



5. THREE TYPES OF LISTENERS

A. Quiet and Passive

This person is a daydreamer. 5% efficient in understanding and remembering what was said during a conversation.

B. False Communicator

This person hears, however is not really listening. They ignore or cannot "see" verbal and non verbal messages. *For instance, imagine the angriest customer you've ever experienced—was it the words or tone and non-verbal cues that really illustrated their anger?*

False communicators miss the true meaning of the message because they miss all of the clues embedded in the message.



C. Active Listener

Gets the message. Is committed to the message, and is completely tuned in. Reiterates what is said and clarifies meaning throughout the conversation.

Which type of listener are you?

4 KEY
ELEMENTS

KEY #1:
HEAR THE
MESSAGE

DEFLECTING



6. UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF GOOD LISTENING
4 KEY ELEMENTS



Key Element #1: Hearing the Message

Our brain recognizes sound as it enters the ear. Then, other "listening channels," such as our eyes and our feelings, seek confirmation of the message from the speaker's nonverbal feedback, such as body language and tone of voice. Hearing is the beginning of the listening process. It is nonselective and involuntary. However, when you choose to listen, it is on purpose.

In order to listen to a speaker, we begin by hearing and selecting oral messages, and accompanying nonverbal signals. When these messages are interesting or important, we pay attention to them. We have to care.

Deflecting

When we deflect from what we've been told, rather than acknowledging it, we can unintentionally communicate that we haven't listened and that we aren't interested. Deflecting shows that we're preoccupied with another topic.

Many of us deflect unwittingly by sharing our personal experiences when we should be focusing on the other party. Think about this from the speaker's perspective: You don't feel like you've been heard when you share a concern with someone and they respond by telling you about themselves. The responder gives you the impression that they aren't even listening, and that they just want to talk about themselves.

Sometimes we mention our own experiences as a way of saying that we can relate to the speaker's experiences. Our intention is to say, "You're not alone." But, when we tell our stories we risk sending a message that we aren't listening and don't care. Don't be a topper--the kind of person who can tell a story to top any story that they're told. We all know a topper, don't we? In a small way, toppers communicate that they are superior. That's not supportive!



DEFLECTING,
Cont'd...

WHY DO WE
LISTEN?

KEY #2:
INTERPRET
THE MESSAGE



This is not to say that sharing your experiences is never helpful. On the contrary, mentors often help their protégés by relating their own experiences as a way to reassure their protégés that their concerns are normal and that their problems are solvable. But, in counseling situations, be careful to use deflecting only at appropriate times.

Speakers may not know that you have heard and understood what they have said if you deflect by moving on to another topic or shifting the focus to yourself or your own experiences.

We choose to listen because:

- The message is important.
- We are interested.
- We feel like listening.
- We listened to this kind of information in the past.
- We like or respect the person speaking.

3 points to remember when hearing a message:

1. *Care*
2. *Pay attention*
3. *Select what is important*



Key Element #2: Interpret the message

Interpreting a speaker's message means coming to a mutual understanding of the speaker's meaning. Good listeners know that a match-up in meaning is a match up in understanding. The word communication comes from the Latin root word, communis, which means "commonness", or a commonness of understanding.

Listeners often experience problems at the interpreting level because no two people perceive a message in the same way. Speakers do not always say exactly what they mean, or mean exactly what they say.

COMMUNICATING THROUGH LISTENING

"KNOWLEDGE SPEAKS, WISDOM LISTENS." – JIMI HENDRIX

WORDS

We probably do not interpret accurately in most listening situations. Listening is a complicated process. Speakers send messages to listeners both verbally and nonverbally. For example, if Jim tells Rob, "you have to do something about the Smith account," Rob must assign meaning to Jim's words, filters, tone of voice and nonverbal cues.

Words

Words themselves have little meaning. They are merely vehicles for the thoughts and feelings of the speaker. People give meaning to words.

What is the difference between these two statements?

"When I look at you, time stands still."

"You have a face that would stop a clock."

Filters

Some Filters that increase or decrease our listening capacity.

- Memories
- Expectations
- Environment
- Attitude
- Beliefs
- Values
- Past experience
- Mood
- Intelligence
- Age
- Language and vocabulary
- Attention span
- Ego

FILTERS



STONE OF
VOICE

NONVERBAL
CUES

KEY #3:
EVALUATE
THE MESSAGE



Tone of Voice

Voice conveys approximately 30% of the meaning of a message. Voices can be insistent, pleading, questioning, whining, demanding, etc. Tom speaks in a quiet monotone. Even though he is intelligent, his voice lacks conviction, and people don't take him seriously. What could Tom do with his voice to get people to listen to him effectively?

Nonverbal cues

A nonverbal cue, or body language, is a message sent by such things as a speaker's gestures, facial expressions, eyes and posture.

More than 50% of human interaction is through nonverbal communication.

3 points to remember when interpreting the message:

1. *Understand your filters.*
2. *Use all five channels.*
3. *Ask for clarification.*



Key Element #3: Evaluating the Message

Good listeners make sure they have all of the key information before forming an opinion. They do not jump to conclusions based on a bias or incomplete information. They may agree or disagree with the speaker. Good listening does not mean automatic compliance. A good listener will weigh and analyze all of the evidence before reaching a final decision or making a written or verbal judgment.

3 points to remember when evaluating the message:

1. *Ask Questions*
2. *Analyze the Evidence*
3. *Don't jump to conclusions*

KEY #4:
RESPOND TO
THE MESSAGE

PROBING

REFLECTING



Key Element #4: Responding to the Message

Good listeners accept responsibility to provide feedback to the speaker to complete the communication process.

Probing

The most skilled communicators' responses in counseling situations involve a lot of probing. Probing means asking for additional information. Not all questions you might ask will be effective. Avoid questions that challenge what has been said because that will put the speaker on the defensive (e.g., "How could you have thought that?"). In addition, a question that changes the subject before the current subject is resolved isn't effective communication. Effective probing is nonjudgmental and flows from what was previously said. Good probing questions ask for elaboration, clarification, and repetition.

Reflecting

As mentioned above, when we listen we should show the other party that what they are saying to us is being heard. Since we can think at about four times the speed that speakers can speak, our brains have a lot of capacity that can be used to process the meaning of what's being said. Reflecting is paraphrasing back to the speaker what they said. One of the things a lot of us find when we try to use this technique is that it's real a challenge. We don't want to just parrot back what was said; we want to paraphrase. It takes creativity to think of appropriate ways to paraphrase what we've heard.

Reflecting can take other forms than paraphrasing back to someone what was just said. For instance, a listener can summarize what he or she heard and also takes the conversation a step further by asking a question for clarification or elaboration.

One of the things we often notice when we reflect during a conversation is that the meaning we have ascribed to what we've heard has missed the speaker's intended meaning.



**RESPONDING
TO THE
MESSAGE,
Cont'd...**

When speakers hear us reflect, they get a chance to correct any misunderstanding that we have. That proves that this technique does truly clarify communication.

For most of us, it takes a lot of practice before we become natural and effective at reflecting. Our first few efforts may sound forced, phony, or patronizing. However, that doesn't mean we should give up learning how to reflect.

Good listeners have a strong desire to reach a common understanding. Confident responses inform the speaker that:

- The message was heard
- It was understood
- It was evaluated appropriately.

3 Points to Remember when Responding to the Message:

- 1. *Want to reach a common understating***
- 2. *Give feedback verbally and or nonverbally***
- 3. *Avoid confusing messages.***

SUMMARY



7. SUMMARY

An easy way to remember great listening skills....

- L** Look at the person
- A** Ask questions
- D** Don't change the subject
- D** Don't interrupt
- E** Empathize
- R** Respond

Listening increases morale, productivity and profits. Stay focused and probe when necessary to understand the true meaning of the conversation. Finally, be ACTIVE in the conversation.

Great listening will lead to great things!

QUESTIONS &
DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

On behalf of The Leadership Institute, thank you for attending this class. We believe that the continued growth of the free paper industry begins with a well-trained, energized sales force.

For more information on TLI's course offerings, check out the afcpconference.org website.

*"I know the price of success: dedication, hard work and an unrelenting devotion to the things you want to see happen."
—Frank Lloyd Wright*

