



Hearing Vs Listening

Hearing

Hearing is an accidental and automatic brain response to sound that requires no effort. We are surrounded by sounds most of the time.

For example, we are accustomed to the sounds of airplanes, lawn mowers, furnace blowers, the rattling of pots and pans, and so on. we train ourselves to ignore them.

Listening

Listening, on the other hand, is purposeful and focused rather than accidental. As a result, it requires motivation and effort. Listening, at its best, is active, focused, concentrated attention for the purpose of understanding the meanings expressed by a speaker.

<u>Hearing</u>	<u>Listening</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accidental• Involuntary• Effortless	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focused• Voluntary• Intentional

Ten Tips to Develop Effective Listening Skills

1. **Make consistent eye-contact while talking**– Body language has a significant role in communication. Maintaining eye contact communicates interest, focus, and understanding with the other person. Make sure to tailor your eye contact as per the need of others.
2. **Avoid distractions** – Always focus on the conversation and do not let your mind wander. Do not let random thoughts disturb your flow and break your concentration.
3. **Understand the context of the speech** – While communicating, focus on the specific words and phrases and try to understand the content and context of the conversation before replying.



4. **Show you are an effective listener by nodding** –you should nod and smile while talking as it is the best way to show your agreement and interest in what the speaker is saying. Do not interrupt while someone is talking
5. **Avoid conversation when stressed or overworked**–Try to avoid or postpone important meetings or discussions if you are overstressed. It gets difficult to concentrate when you are exhausted, and you end up wasting time. A bit of Yoga or meditation helps you destress in such situations.
6. **Pick up important points and let the speaker know** – try to pick up a few significant points and discuss them when the speaker finishes talking. Make an honest effort and clarify your doubts.
7. **Ask open-ended questions** – If you did not understand some parts of the conversation, encourage them to elaborate and ask open-ended questions to get lengthy responses from the speaker. This helps in understanding the big picture.
8. **Stay equipped with knowledge**–Gather relevant information on the topic so that you can not only contribute effectively to the conversation but also listen patiently when the speaker discusses the same or related topics.
9. **Provide small encouragements** -Listener can build rapport with the speaker by using small verbal encouraging words such as “right”, “sure”, “yes”, “that makes sense”, “I understand”, and others.
10. **Practice listening at home** – Listen to radio, podcastson developing listening skills and learn from them. You can also play an audio and try to gauge your listening ability. Recollect from what was played and make pointers. Seek assistance from a friend to help you evaluate your listening skills.

Benefits of active listening

There are many important benefits of active listening, these include:

- **Builds deep trust** - While building trust takes time, it leads to great benefits such as lifelong friendships and a promise of help in difficult times.
- **Broadens your perspective** - listening to other people’s perspectives allows you to look at life from different perspectives, some of which you may not have thought of before.
- **Strengthens your patience** - The ability to be a good listener takes time and you need to develop it with regular efforts over time.. Patience to let the other person express his or her feelings and thoughts honestly while you don’t judge.
- **Makes you approachable** - People feel more naturally inclined to communicate with patient listener you. By being there for them, you give them the freedom to express their feelings.



- **Increases competence and knowledge** - Great listening skills make an employee more competent and capable, regardless of their position. The more an individual can get information out of the meetings, the instructions, and reports provided to him, the more efficient and successful they will be at completing the task. Listening also builds knowledge .
- **Saves time and money** - Effective listening not only reduces risks of misunderstanding and mistakes that could be very damaging to the business, it saves time and money by avoiding starting a task or a project over again.
- **Helps detect and solve problems** - As a leader, they should always be attentive to what employees have to say. In the workplace, they are the first ones to spot flaws and come up with suggestions for improvements. Listening to colleagues will help you understand what needs to be changed and worked on to retain talent and make improvements.