



Communicate!

16e Chapter 6:

Listening

When you've finished this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Describe listening and why it is so vital to effective communication.

2. Explain why effective listening is such a challenge.
3. Employ strategies to improve your listening skills.
4. Practice responding effectively to what you hear based on the audience and occasion.

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What Is Listening?

A close-up photograph of an elderly person's ear. The person has white hair and is wearing a black hearing aid device around their head. A hand is visible, gently holding the ear. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

Hearing

is the physical process of sound entering the ears...



Listening

is actively paying attention and understanding those sounds.

Listening Challenges

A woman with her hair in a bun, wearing an orange sweater and blue pants, sits on a light-colored floor. She is looking down and to the right with a somber expression. The background shows a grey sofa and a guitar leaning against a white wall. The text 'Listening Apprehension' is overlaid in large white font on the left side of the image.

Listening Apprehension

anxiety felt about listening

Listening Style:



our favored and usually unconscious approach to listening

Content-Oriented Listeners



focus on understanding and evaluating the information and resources.

People-Oriented Listeners



focus on the feelings of others in the conversation.

Action-Oriented Listeners



searching for the point and what they have to do as a result.

Time-Oriented Listeners



use non-verbal and quick to the point.

Processing approach

Passive listening



is like autopilot and subconscious.

Active listening



is deliberate and conscious.

Active Listening Strategies

Attending:

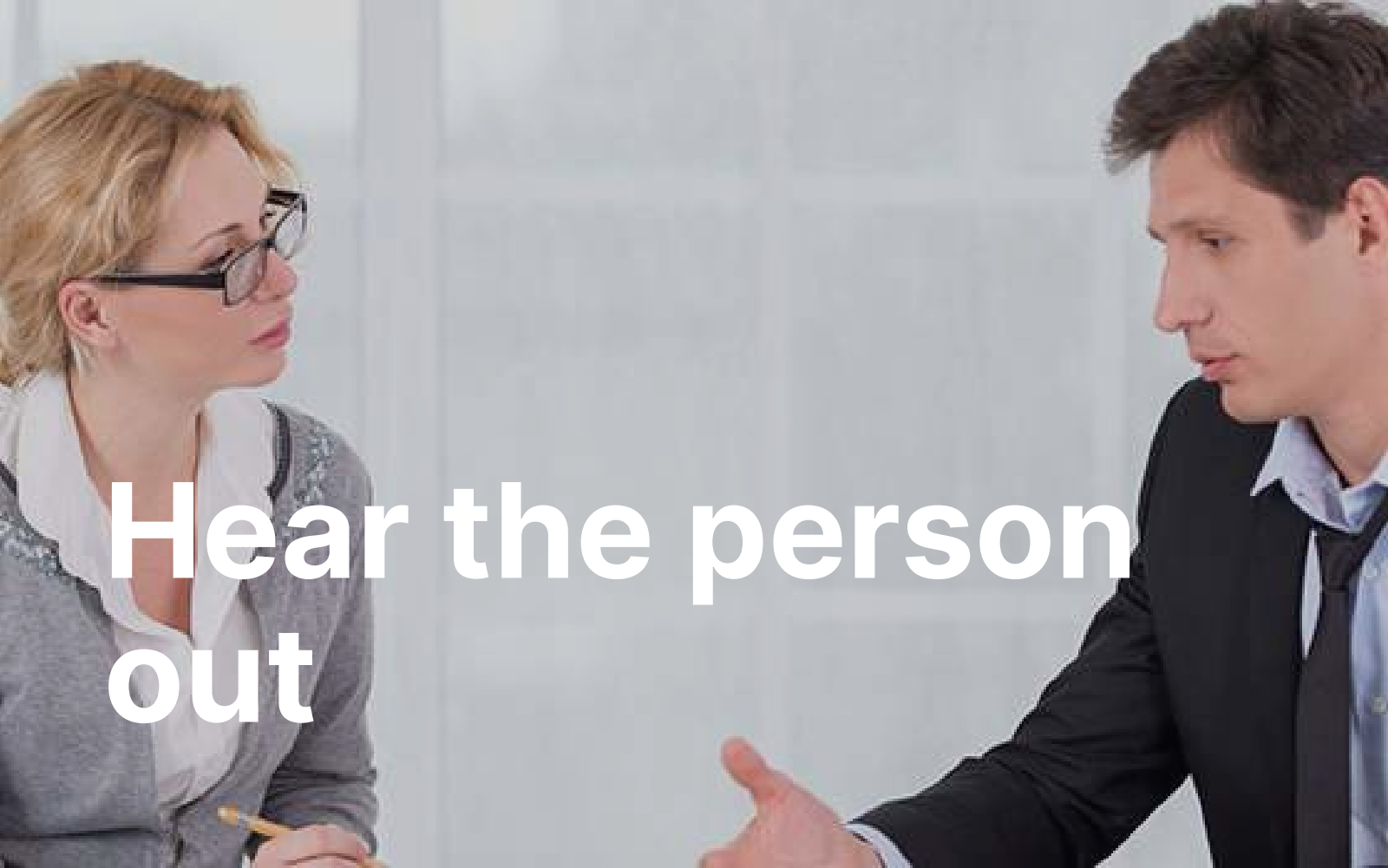
the process of intentionally perceiving and focusing on a message



**Get physically
ready to listen**



**Resist mental
distractions**



**Hear the person
out**



**Find personal
relevance**

Understanding:

accurately interpreting a message

**Identify the
main point**



**Ask
questions**



Paraphrase



both content and feelings.

Put in your own words showing understanding and meaning.

Empathize:

intellectually identifying with the feelings or attitudes of another.



Empathize

- **Empathetic responsiveness**
- Perspective taking
- Sympathetic responsiveness



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Remembering:

being able to retain and recall information
later

Remembering:

- **Repeat the information.**
- Construct mnemonics.
- Take notes.



Remembering:

- Repeat the information.
- **Construct mnemonics.**
- Take notes.

Mnemonic for the Planets

My	→	Mercury
Very	→	Venus
Educated	→	Earth
Mother	→	Mars
Just	→	Jupiter
Served	→	Saturn
Us	→	Uranus
Nine	→	Neptune
Pizzas	→	Pluto

artofm

Remembering:

- Repeat the information.
- Construct mnemonics.
- **Take notes.**



Evaluating:

the process of critically analyzing a message to determine its truthfulness, utility, and trustworthiness

something fact-based
you experience through
one of your five senses



what you think or
decide about something
you have observed



Separate Facts from Inferences

Probe for information



Responding:

providing feedback

Listening Response Strategies

Emotional support



supportive responses.

Respectful Disagreement



Formal Constructive Speech Critique

Guidelines for Supportive Responses

Figure 6.1 Guidelines for Supportive Responses

Guidelines	Examples
1. Clearly state that your aim is to help.	I'd like to help, what can I do?
2. Express acceptance or affection; do not condemn or criticize.	I understand that you just can't seem to accept this.
3. Demonstrate care, concern, and interest in the other's situation; do not give a lengthy recount of a similar situation.	What are you planning to do now? OR tell me more; what happened then?
4. Indicate that you are available to listen and support the other without intruding.	I know that we've not been that close, but sometimes it helps to have someone to listen and I'd like to do that for you.
5. State that you are an ally.	I'm with you on this OR Well, I'm on your side; this isn't right.
6. Acknowledge the other's feelings and situation, and express your sincere sympathy.	I'm so sorry to see you feeling so bad; I can see that you're devastated by what has happened.
7. Assure the other that their feelings are legitimate; do not tell the other how to feel or to ignore those feelings.	Hey, I get it. With all that has happened to you, you have a right to be angry.
8. Use prompting comments to encourage elaboration.	Uh-huh, Yeah, OR I see. How did you feel about that? OR Tell me more.

Guidelines for Respectfully Disagreeing

Figure 6.2 Guidelines for Respectfully Disagreeing

Guidelines	Examples
1. Begin by clarifying respect for the speaker and their intent.	I really appreciate your passion about the neighborhood.
2. Use "I" language to clearly own the comments as your opinion or perspective.	I don't agree that we should ask everyone to decorate their front yards for the holiday because some people don't celebrate it and some may not be able to afford to decorate.
3. Use specific language to point out the topic of disagreement and separate the topic from the speaker.	I really like the idea of decorating and will surely decorate my front yard even though I won't support asking everyone to do so.

Figure 6.3 Examples of Effective and Ineffective Speech Critiques

	Ineffective critique	Effective critique
Content	"The sources you cited are old and no longer represent current thinking on the topic."	"I noticed you relied heavily on Johnson's 1969 essay about global warming. For me, your argument would be more compelling if you were to cite research that has been published in the last five years."
Structure	"You were really hard to follow."	"I really appreciate what you had to say on this topic. I would have been able to follow your main points better if I had heard clear transitions between each one. Transitions would have helped me notice the switch from one topic to the next."
Delivery	"You talk too fast!"	"I was fascinated by the evidence you offered to support the first main point. It would have been even more compelling for me if you were to slow down while explaining that information. That would give me time to understand the material more fully before we moved on to the next main point."

Effective and Ineffective Speech Critiques