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LISTENING

The Nature of Listening

- » Listening is the active process of making meaning out of another person's spoken message
 - Listening is active, and requires more than just hearing words. People listen for various reasons. Sometimes it is to learn, to evaluate, or provide empathy.
 - » **People Oriented**: A concern for other people's emotions and interests
 - » **Action-Oriented**: Emphasizes organization and precision.
 - » **Content-Oriented**: Intellectual challenges and likes details and to think things through.
 - » **Time-Oriented**: Is efficient and prefers conversations to be quick and to the point.

Listening Effectively

- » We spend much of our waking day listening. Just because you think you're listening, doesn't mean you are listening EFFECTIVELY.
- » Good listening skills are essential in the workplace, families, and social relationships. If you are listening with the goal of understanding the speakers meaning, then you're listening effectively.
- » In a survey of 1,000 human resource managers, listening effectively was ranked as the single most important quality of an effective manager.
- » **I wish I was a better listener when**

Misconceptions about Listening

- » Myth: Hearing is the same as listening
 - Hearing is the perception of sound. Just because you are hearing, doesn't mean that you are listening.
- » Myth: Listening is natural and effortless
 - Listening is a learned skill, not an innate ability like hearing. We have to acquire them and work at them.
- » Myth: All listeners hear the same message
 - Our perceptions of what we see and hear are always limited. Our experiences, our biases, and even our gender and culture influence how we create meaning from information we take in.

Culture and Sex Affect Listening

- » Culture and sex affect some dimensions of listening behavior. Cultural messages shape many communication behaviors, and listening is no exception. And women has been shown to maintain eye contact while listening more than men do.
- » In **individualistic cultures**, most value direct, straightforward communication, and listeners become impatient with speakers don't get to the point.
- » In **collectivistic cultures** emphasize harmony over efficiency and pay closer attention to nonverbal behaviors and cues to determine the real meaning of the message.

Stages of Effective Listening

» HURIER model of effective listening

- Hearing: We can hear someone without listening to what they say.
- Understanding: It's not enough to hear what is being said, but you have to comprehend what is being said.
- Remembering: The ability to store something in your memory and retrieve it when needed.

Stages of Effective Listening

» HURIER model of effective listening

- Interpreting: The ability to understand and interpret what was said. This is done through verbal and non-verbal cues
- Evaluating: You must first judge whether the statements are true. Then you separate fact and opinion and finally, put the speakers words in context with other information.
- Responding: This is the feedback you give that indicates that you've been listening.

Types of Listening

- » Whenever you watch the news, or sit in a classroom, you're engaged in **informational listening**. In this mode you are simply taking in information and are listening to learn something new.
- » **Critical listening** is when your goal is to evaluate or analyze what you're hearing. This requires you to not only take in the information but also to assess and judge it.
- » **Empathic listening** occurs when you are trying to identify with the speaker by understanding and experiencing what he or she is thinking or feeling.

Barriers to Effective Listening

Why are so few of us good listeners? In most cases it's because several problems get in our way, acting as barriers to our ability to listen well.

- » **Noise** is anything that distracts us from listening to what we wish to listen to. This could be the television, texting on your phone, playing games, loud music, and any other distractions.

Barriers to Effective Listening

- » Pseudolistening and selective attention are barriers to effective listening
 - Pseudolistening means pretending to pay attention to someone
 - Selective attention means listening only to what we want to hear

Barriers to Effective Listening

» Information overload is a barrier to effective listening

- We are exposed to multiple messages daily. Research has shown that on a daily basis we are exposed to 600 – 625 advertising messages a day. Therefore, It can be difficult to pay attention to particular messages when we have so many to process
- We also need to avoid overload from computer-mediated and other sources of technology that distract us.

Barriers to Effective Listening

- » Glazing over is a barrier to effective listening. Sometimes people speak more slowly than we can listen, so our minds can wander when we listen to others
 - Glazing over can cause us to miss important details, listen uncritically, and make it appear as though we aren't listening.

Barriers to Effective Listening

- » Rebuttal tendency is a barrier to effective listening
 - Rebuttal tendency means debating a speaker's point and formulating a reply while the person is still speaking
 - Rebuttal tendency requires mental energy that should be spent listening and can cause us to miss details

Barriers to Effective Listening

- » **Closed-mindedness** is the tendency not to listen to anything with which you disagree
- Many people are closed-minded only about certain issues, not about everything.
 - When we refuse to listen to ideas we disagree with, we limit our ability to learn from other people and their experiences.
 - Just because you listen to the idea, does not mean that you accept the idea.

Barriers to Effective Listening

- » Competitive interrupting means using interruptions to take control of a conversation
 - Most interruptions are not competitive. Some are to offer support, or stop the speaker for clarification, or even to warn someone of impending danger. However, in this case, competitive interrupting is a method to dominate a conversation and the goal is simply to speak more than the other person and make their information the priority.

Becoming a Better Listener

» **Become a better informational listener:**

- Separate what is and isn't said. In some cases, you may ask for confirmation, or paraphrase what was said in your own words.
- Avoid the confirmation bias, the tendency to pay attention only to information that supports your own values and beliefs while discounting the information that doesn't
- Listen for substance more than style and look past what is dramatic and vivid and focus on the what is actually being said.

Becoming a Better Listener

» Become a better critical listener:

- Be a skeptic and evaluate what is being said. Skepticism isn't about being cynical or finding fault, it means putting aside your biases and be willing to be persuaded by the quality of evidence given to you.
- Evaluate a speaker's credibility
- Understand probability and the idea that the likelihood of what you're being told could be true.

Becoming a Better Listener

» **Become a better empathic listener**

- Be open minded and listen nonjudgmentally. Listen without interrupting and don't offer advice unless asked.
- Acknowledge feelings and allow them to express their emotions.
- Communicate support nonverbally. These are the non-verbal clues that show that you are listening and that you are interested.