

Chapter 7

Active Listening

The Listening Process (1 of 3)

- Stages:
 - **Hearing**
 - Physically processing sound
 - **Understanding**
 - Recognizing literal meaning of words
 - **Interpreting**
 - Identifying implications in person's words

The Listening Process (2 of 3)

- **Evaluating**
 - Comparing new information against past knowledge
- **Remembering**
 - Calling messages back into conscious mind
 - **Mnemonics:** mental devices that aid memory
- **Responding**
 - Communicating attention and comprehension to speaker

The Listening Process (3 of 3)

- **Positive feedback**
 - Look directly at speaker
 - Smile, position body toward speaker
 - Lean forward
- **Negative feedback**
 - Avoid eye contact, turn your body away
 - Look bored, distracted

Motives for Listening (1 of 2)

- **Listening functions**
 - Different reasons we have for listening
 - Shape how you choose to listen

Motives for Listening (2 of 2)

- Five common listening functions:
 - To comprehend
 - To provide support
 - To analyze
 - To appreciate
 - To discern

Multitasking and Listening

- People who **multitask**:
 - Shift attention between many things simultaneously
 - Poor listeners
 - More likely to mishear messages
 - More likely to miss messages completely

Listening Styles

- **Listening style**
 - Habitual pattern of listening behaviors
 - Reflects attitudes, beliefs, predispositions about listening

Four Listening Styles (1 of 3)

- **People-oriented listeners**
 - See listening as opportunity to establish bonds
- **Content-oriented listeners**
 - Prefer to be intellectually challenged

Four Listening Styles (2 of 3)

- **Action-oriented listeners**
 - Like focused, organized information
 - Want clear, to-the-point messages
- **Time-oriented listeners**
 - Prefer brief encounters

Four Listening Styles (3 of 3)

FIGURE 7.1

WHAT'S YOUR LISTENING STYLE?

When a friend comes to you with a problem, do you . . .

A

focus on her emotions?



You have a **people-oriented** listening style.



B

try to imagine the situation from all angles?



You have a **content-oriented** listening style.



C

try to find the clearest solution?



You have an **action-oriented** listening style.



D

listen as best you can before you have to leave?



You have a **time-oriented** listening style.



1. Introwiz1/Shutterstock.com; 2. WonderfulPixel/Shutterstock.com; 3. Fenton one/Shutterstock.com

Gender and Listening Styles

- Research suggests:
 - Men slightly prefer action-, time-oriented styles
 - Women favor people-, content-oriented styles
 - Men tend toward task-oriented, hurried listening
 - Women perceive listening as relational

Culture and Listening Styles

- Culture influences people's listening styles
- Perception of competency is relative
- Adapt your listening style accordingly

Barriers to Active Listening

- **Selective listening**
 - Absorbing some pieces of information, dismissing rest
- **Pseudo-listening**
 - Pretending to pay attention
- **Aggressive listening**
 - Seeking only an opportunity to attack partner

Improving Your Active Listening Skills (1 of 3)

- Manage your feedback
 - Positive
 - Obvious
 - Appropriate
 - Immediate

Improving Your Active Listening Skills (2 of 3)

- Adapt your listening
 - Situational demands
 - Purpose of the encounter
 - Needs and wants of the speakers

Improving Your Active Listening Skills (3 of 3)

- Recognize the value of silence
 - A “sympathetic ear”
 - A “shoulder to cry on”