

**Can You
HEAR ME
NOW?**

**Learn
Lasting
Listening Skills**

With Discussion Sheet

PATTY ANN

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

Learn Lasting Listening Skills

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Published by Patty Ann
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Welcome to

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

Learn Lasting Listening Skills

You may use this ready made mini course as
a primary or supplemental instructional tool.

The chapter end worksheet is designed to be used several ways:

- As a PowerPoint to share with your students.
- As a handout to start a discussion.
- As an independent worksheet.
- As a quiz.

Suggested ways this book can be used:

- Post on your school's website for easy student access.
- Copy individual pages for learning.
- Note: This book is part of a larger learning unit called **Essential Communication Skills.**

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THANK YOU & ENJOY THIS BOOK !

Listening is Challenging



Listening is an important aspect of good communication skills. It's not always easy to do, and here are some reasons why.

- **Noise** from any source around yourself can be so distracting that it may be hard to hear.
- **Hearing impairment** caused by physical and health ailments.
- **Information overload** is too much information taken in too fast and over an extended period of time. You can only focus your attention for so long before your mind wanders off.
- **Complex messages** that contains too many issues and details, or uses foreign technical jargon can easily confuse and lose the listener.
- **Personal reasons** are your own immediate concerns. Problems can also make it difficult to give your full undivided attention towards another person.



Poor Listening Habits

Not all listeners receive the same message. We tend to assume that just because someone gives another person a turn to talk that they are actively listening. Every person listens and interprets information differently. A person's poor listening habits can be a source of miscommunication. See if you can recognize some or all of these behaviors.

Stage hogs want to be the center of attention. It's typical for stage hogs to talk too much and talk over another person to prevent them from talking. Do you think stage hogs listen to others when they are competing to get heard?

Pseudo-listeners nod their heads and appear to be good listeners, but in reality their thoughts are elsewhere. If you're thinking about your own part, are you really listening?

Selective listeners only pick out parts of a message that interest them and neglect the rest. Beware a selective listener will propose certain ideas out of the original conversation and use it to their advantage.

People who **fill in the gaps** tell distorted stories. They make up missing information to give the impression they 'got the whole story'.

An **ambusher** will listen carefully to you, but only to gather information that will be used against you later. Be careful of sharing personal information with someone who may use abuse your trust.

When listening to others **defensive listeners** take innocent comments and interpret the comments as personal attacks on themselves. Do you know someone who is easily upset by apparently innocent remarks?

Reasons to Listen



Now that you understand some of the challenges of listening, let's talk about why you should listen up!

1) To understand and retain information. Whether you are a student or a professional in the work world, people who listen well are far more successful than their non-listening counterparts.

2) To build and maintain relationships. Listening is a key to improve and enrich your personal life. Listening to others shows that you value, care, and respect their opinions, which in turn bonds you closer together.

3) To help others or to be helped. At some point everyone either needs help, or gives help to someone else. Can you think of an instance today where this was, or will be true for you?

4) To problem solve. By participating in problem-resolution you will grow and benefit by learning to be more resourceful.

5) To respond. Actively listening to what someone has to say puts you in a better position to give accurate and timely feedback.

6) To evaluate messages. As a message is received it is interpreted on many levels. For instance, you must decide if you need to take action; if it's just good information to know and remember; or even if the message is credible. Understanding what you hear is an ongoing process which can be influenced by learning good listening habits.



Establishing good listening habits helps you receive information and solve problems.

This next section will focus on some ways to develop good listening habits that will help you in your interactions.

Good Listening Habits to Develop

There are 3 very simple skills you can learn to do that will make a positive difference in your daily communication. Give these skills a try. Don't fret if your first attempts fall short of your expectations as you'll become more competent with practice.

1. **Ask Questions**
2. **Paraphrase**
3. **Empathize**



1) Ask Questions! Why? Because

- Helps to clarify messages
- Helps seek complete answers
- Gathers more facts and details
- Gives the speaker more information
- Encourages further explanation and discovery
- Increases learning about others thoughts and feelings

2) Paraphrase

Paraphrasing is giving feedback to the speaker. In your own words, you repeat the message you think the speaker sent. While it might seem unnecessary to repeat a message, the intent is to clarify information. By now you understand that messages can become distorted by poor listening, loud noises, perceptions, and a bunch of other reasons. Paraphrasing encourages a common understanding of a situation.

Paraphrasing Example:

Jack: "I need you to help me wash our car today."

Tim: "We have three cars, which one needs washing?"

Jack: "Oh sorry, the pickup truck."

Paraphrasing Example:

Mary has noticed her daughter Karen has been looking
upset for the past few days. So Mary asks Karen if she
noticed you seem rather sad lately. What's wrong?

"Brooke says she can't play with me anymore. I don't
think she likes me," Karen says.

"Oh, I'm sorry. That must make you feel bad. Have
you asked Brooke why she can't play with you?"

Karen thoughtfully says, "But maybe I should."

"Good idea, then you'll understand Brooke's reasons
for not being able to play. Just now I understand
why you've been looking upset," Mary remarks.

3) Empathizing

Empathizing means as a listener puts themselves in a speaker's
place and sees the world from their view point. While you don't have
to agree with what the speaker says, empathizing helps you to
understand where the other person is coming from. Empathy is
important because it allows the listener to:

Acknowledge a speaker's feelings and thoughts

- Understand that a speaker's viewpoint comes from their own background and experiences
- Appreciate both the content (what's said) and relational aspects (what's meant) of a conversation

Having **EMPATHY** means developing these skills:

Open-minded. Have the ability to set aside your own attitudes and beliefs to consider that other people have just as valid viewpoints.

Commitment. You must have the desire to understand another person's viewpoint, which times can take patience and perseverance.

Imagination. It is not always enough to be open-minded and have a commitment to empathy. Being able to put yourself into another person's frame of thought by understanding their background can open communication lines that might otherwise be closed off.



Empathy Example:

Jim: "When are you going to get a job?"

Jane: "Lately you always nagging at me about a job! Get off my back!"

Jim: "In 3 months I have a big house payment due and I am getting nervous because lately I've been hearing rumors of layoffs at work."

Jane: "Gee, I didn't realize that. No wonder you're feeling a lot of pressure. I guess I will take that last job offered even though it's not my dream job."

Quick Review

Why is Listening Challenging?

- Noise from outside sources
- Hearing impairments
- Information overload
- Complex messages
- Personal reasons such as day dreaming

What is a good reason to listen?

- To understand and retain information
- To build and maintain relationships
- To help others, or to be helped
- To problem solve
- To respond

Good Listening Habits to Listen are:

- Ask questions
- Paraphrase
- Empathy

Sample

Discussion

What are some reasons it might be difficult for you to listen to others?

1) _____

2) _____

List 3 reasons listening is important:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Name 3 good listening habits to develop:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Challenge Question Your boss just told you that the project you finished was done incorrectly. He wants you to come into work early for the next week to fix the problem. The project belongs to an important client, and your company could lose the business if the deadline is not met. Write your responses of how you might handle this situation:

Ask questions to clarify facts: _____

Paraphrase what you heard in your own words back to your boss:

Use empathy to acknowledge your boss' position:

Thank YOU for Previewing

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