

LESSON 4

EFFECTIVE

LISTENING

SKILLS

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WHY LISTENING MATTERS



The Most Important Communication Skill

Surprising Statistics:

- 45% of communication time is spent LISTENING
- 30% speaking
- 16% reading
- 9% writing

Why Good Listening = Success:

1. Better Understanding

Catch important details, avoid mistakes

2. Stronger Relationships

People feel valued when you truly listen

3. Better Learning

Absorb information more effectively

4. Career Advancement

Employers value good listeners - better teamwork, fewer errors

✗ The Cost of Poor Listening:

- Misunderstandings and conflicts
- Wasted time repeating information
- Missed opportunities
- Damaged relationships

HEARING VS. LISTENING



Understanding the Difference

HEARING (ได้ยิน)	LISTENING (ฟัง)
Physical process	Mental process
Automatic	Active
Not a choice	A choice
No effort required	Requires effort
Just sound entering ears	Understanding meaning

Real-Life Example:

Hearing: You're at a coffee shop. You hear music, conversations, coffee machine sounds. All sounds enter your ears, but you're not paying attention to any specific one.

Listening: Your friend starts telling you about their job interview. You focus on their words, watch their expressions, ask questions, remember details. This is active listening.



The Key:

Listening requires effort and intention. It's a skill you can develop!

ACTIVE LISTENING DEFINED



What is Active Listening?

Active Listening = Fully Concentrating + Understanding + Responding + Remembering

The 4 Key Components:

1. CONCENTRATING

Give full attention to the speaker

Put away distractions (phone, laptop)

Make eye contact, face the speaker

2. UNDERSTANDING

Try to grasp the message and meaning

Consider the speaker's perspective

Read between the lines (tone, emotions)

3. RESPONDING

Show you're listening (nod, verbal cues)

Ask clarifying questions

Paraphrase to confirm understanding

4. REMEMBERING

Retain key information

Take notes if appropriate

Follow up on important points later

LISTENING BARRIERS



What Prevents Good Listening?

Barrier Type	Examples
Physical Barriers	Noise, uncomfortable environment, distance, technology issues, physiological (hungry, tired, sick, sensory limitations)
Psychological Barriers	Daydreaming, preconceived opinions, emotions, anxiety, prejudice
Language Barriers	Difficult vocabulary, accents, speed of speech, complexity

Self-Check Question:

Which barriers do YOU struggle with most? Identifying them is the first step to overcoming them!

OVERCOMING BARRIERS



Practical Strategies to Improve Listening

For Physical Barriers:

- Control your environment: Choose quiet spaces, minimize noise
- Sit strategically: Front/center in lectures, face-to-face in conversations
- Test technology: Check audio before important online meetings
- Take care of yourself: Eat, rest, stay comfortable

For Psychological Barriers:

- Stay present: When mind wanders, gently bring focus back
- Suspend judgment: Listen first, evaluate later
- Manage emotions: Take deep breaths if feeling upset
- Challenge biases: Be aware of your prejudices, listen with open mind
- Practice mindfulness: Focus exercises help concentration

OVERCOMING BARRIERS (2)



For Language Barriers:

- Build vocabulary: Learn new words regularly
- Ask for clarification: "Could you explain that?" "What does X mean?"
- Request slower speech: Politely ask speaker to slow down
- Practice with different accents: Watch international content
- Use context clues: Guess meaning from surrounding words

THE SOLER METHOD

Active Listening Body Language Technique

SOLER = 5 Physical Behaviors for Active Listening

S - Sit/Stand SQUARELY

Face the speaker directly (not at an angle)

Shows you're giving full attention

O - OPEN Posture

Uncross arms and legs

Keep body relaxed, not defensive

Signals openness and receptivity

L - LEAN Forward (Slightly)

Lean toward speaker a little bit

Shows interest and engagement

Don't overdo it - just slightly

E - Eye Contact

Maintain comfortable eye contact

Natural breaks are okay - don't stare!

Cultural note: eye contact norms vary by culture


R - RELAX

Stay calm and natural

Don't fidget or appear tense

Breathe normally, be comfortable



 **Practice Tip:**
Practice SOLER in your next conversation. It might feel awkward at first, but it becomes natural with practice!

NOTE-TAKING FOR LISTENING



Why Take Notes While Listening?

Benefits of Note-Taking:

- **Better retention:** Writing helps memory
- **Stay focused:** Keeps mind engaged
- **Reference later:** Review important points
- **Organize thoughts:** See connections and structure

The Cornell Method:

Divide your paper into 3 sections:

1. Notes Column (Right, 70%)

Write main ideas, details, examples during listening

Use abbreviations, symbols, short phrases

2. Cue Column (Left, 30%)

After listening: write questions, keywords, main topics

Helps review and test yourself

3. Summary (Bottom, 2-3 lines)

Write brief summary of main points

In your own words

NOTE-TAKING FOR LISTENING (2)



Quick Tips:

- Don't write everything - focus on main ideas
- Use abbreviations: w/ = with, b/c = because, → = leads to
- Listen for signal words: 'importantly', 'first', 'however', 'in conclusion'
- Review and fill gaps immediately after listening

LISTENING CONTEXTS



Adapting Your Listening to the Situation

Context	Purpose	Focus On	Note-Taking
Lectures/ Presentations	Learn new information	Structure, main points, examples	Take detailed notes
Meetings	Share info, make decisions	Action items, responsibilities, deadlines	Note decisions
Conversations	Build relationships, exchange ideas	Emotions, perspectives, unspoken	Not always needed
Instructions	Follow steps	Sequence, details, warnings	Note steps or ask to repeat

Key Insight:

Different situations require different listening approaches. Be flexible and adjust your strategy!

ASKING CLARIFYING QUESTIONS



How to Ask When You Don't Understand

Why Ask Questions?

- Prevents misunderstanding
- Shows you're engaged
- Deepens understanding
- It's better to ask than to guess wrong!

ASKING CLARIFYING QUESTIONS (2)



Types of Clarifying Questions:

1. Ask for Repetition:

"Could you repeat that, please?"

"I'm sorry, I didn't catch that. Could you say it again?"

"Would you mind repeating the last part?"

2. Ask for Definition:

"What does (word) mean?"

"Could you explain what you mean by (term)?"

"I'm not familiar with that term. Could you clarify?"

3. Ask for Examples:

"Could you give me an example?"

"Can you show me what you mean?"

"Like what, for instance?"

4. Confirm Understanding:

"So, you're saying that...?"

"Just to make sure I understand, ...?"

"Let me see if I've got this right..."



Important:

Never pretend to understand when you don't. Asking shows intelligence and engagement, not weakness!

PARAPHRASING



Restating to Show Understanding

What is Paraphrasing?

Repeating what someone said using YOUR OWN WORDS to confirm you understood correctly.

Why Paraphrase?

- Confirms understanding: Speaker can correct if wrong
- Shows you're listening: Demonstrates engagement
- Helps memory: Processing info in your words aids retention
- Builds rapport: People feel heard and valued

PARAPHRASING (2)



How to Paraphrase:

1. Start with a phrase:

"So what you're saying is..."

"If I understand correctly..."

"In other words..."

2. Restate the main idea in your own words

3. Check if you got it right:

"Is that correct?"

"Did I get that right?"

Examples:

Speaker: "This project is behind schedule because we're waiting for the client's feedback on the design."

You: "So we can't move forward until the client reviews the design? Is that right?"

Speaker: "I'm concerned that if we don't hire more staff, the quality of our service will decline."

You: "If I understand correctly, you think we need to expand the team to maintain service standards?"

SUMMARIZING



Capturing Main Points Concisely

Paraphrasing vs. Summarizing:

- Paraphrasing: Restates ONE idea or point
- Summarizing: Captures MAIN POINTS of longer discussion

When to Summarize:

- At the end of a meeting or conversation
- After a long presentation or lecture
- Before moving to a new topic
- When someone has shared a lot of information

SUMMARIZING (2)



How to Summarize:

1. Start with a summary phrase:
"To summarize..."
"So, the main points are..."
"Let me recap what we've discussed..."
2. State 2-4 main points (not everything!)
3. Use your own words, keep it brief
4. Check accuracy: "Have I captured the key points?"

Example:

After a 20-minute meeting:

"Let me summarize what we've agreed on. First, we'll launch the new product in Q2 instead of Q1. Second, marketing will prepare a social media campaign by March 15th. And third, we need to hire two more customer service reps before the launch. Did I miss anything important?"

💡 Pro Tip:

Summarizing helps everyone stay on the same page and creates a shared understanding.

LISTENING FOR SIGNAL WORDS



Words That Guide Your Listening

Signal words tell you what's coming next and help you follow the speaker's logic.

Type	Examples
Sequence (ลำดับ)	First, second, next, then, finally, lastly
Addition (เพิ่มเติม)	Also, furthermore, in addition, moreover, besides
Contrast (ความแตกต่าง)	However, but, on the other hand, although, yet
Cause/Effect (สาเหตุ/ผล)	Because, therefore, as a result, consequently, thus
Emphasis (เน้นย้ำ)	Importantly, significantly, notably, especially, indeed
Summary (สรุป)	In conclusion, to sum up, overall, in summary, finally

TWO TYPES OF LISTENING



Listening for Specific Information vs. General Understanding

1. Listening for **GENERAL** Understanding

Goal: Get the big picture, main ideas

Strategy: Don't worry about every word, focus on overall meaning

Example: Understanding the topic of a presentation, getting the gist

2. Listening for **SPECIFIC** Information

Goal: Find particular details (dates, numbers, names, facts)

Strategy: Focus intensely, listen for keywords

Example: Finding meeting time, catching phone numbers, noting deadlines

TWO TYPES OF LISTENING (2)



Practice Exercise:

Passage 1 - Listen for **GENERAL** understanding:

"Last week, our company launched a new product line focused on sustainable packaging. The response from customers has been overwhelmingly positive. Sales exceeded our projections by 30%, and we received hundreds of emails praising our environmental commitment. The marketing team deserves credit for their creative campaign."

Question: What is the main topic?

Passage 2 - Listen for **SPECIFIC** information:

"The project deadline is March 15th. Sarah will handle the design, Tom will manage the budget of \$50,000, and I'll coordinate with the client. We'll meet every Tuesday at 2 PM in Conference Room B."

Questions: When is deadline? Who manages budget? Meeting time?

CRITICAL LISTENING



Evaluating What You Hear

What is Critical Listening?

Listening + Thinking + Evaluating = Not just accepting everything

Questions to Ask:

- Is this fact or opinion? (Fact: can be verified, Opinion: personal belief)
- What evidence supports this? (Examples, data, research?)
- Is the source credible? (Speaker qualified? Any bias?)
- What's missing? (Other perspectives? Counter-arguments?)

CRITICAL LISTENING (2)



Practice: Identify Fact or Opinion

Statement 1:

"This smartphone is the best on the market. Everyone should buy it."

(Opinion + bias, no evidence, persuasive language)

Statement 2:

"According to Harvard study, people who exercise report 25% higher satisfaction."

(Fact with source, can be verified, more credible)

Statement 3:

"The meeting is next Monday at 10 AM in Room 302."

(Fact, specific verifiable information, no bias)

LISTENING CHALLENGES



Dealing with Accents, Speed, and Complex Topics

Challenge	How to Handle
Different Accents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to diverse content (BBC, CNN, etc.)• Focus on keywords and context• Ask politely to repeat if needed
Fast Speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask to slow down politely• Listen for main ideas, not every word• Practice with fast content
Complex Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read about topic beforehand• Learn key vocabulary first• Take extensive notes• Ask for simpler explanation

Remember:

These challenges are normal! Everyone faces them. The key is having strategies.

PRACTICE - UNDERSTANDING KEY WORDS



Focus on Meaning, Not Perfect Pronunciation



Practice Instructions:

Instructor will read sentences with varied pronunciation. Focus on understanding the MEANING.



Important Tip:

Different people pronounce words differently - that's normal!
Focus on keywords and context.

PRACTICE - UNDERSTANDING KEY WORDS (2)



Practice Sentences:

Sentence 1:

"The water bottle is on the table in the conference room."

Question: Where is the water bottle? (Answer: on the table in conference room)

Sentence 2:

"I can't understand this document. Can you help me?"

Question: What does the speaker need? (Answer: help understanding document)

Sentence 3:

"The project deadline has been moved to next Friday afternoon."

Question: When is the new deadline? (Answer: next Friday afternoon)

Try varying:

- Reading speed (normal, then slightly faster)
- Emphasis on different words
- Natural pronunciation variations

PRACTICE - SPEED VARIATIONS



Listening at Different Speaking Speeds

Exercise:

Instructor will read passage 3 times at different speeds. Take notes each time.

Passage:

"Our team completed the market research project last month. We surveyed 500 customers across five cities. The results showed that 78% prefer online shopping, and 65% value free shipping over fast delivery. These findings will shape our new marketing strategy."

Reading 1: SLOW (pause between phrases)

Students: Try to get ALL details

Reading 2: NORMAL (conversational pace)

Students: Focus on main ideas and key numbers

Reading 3: FAST (quick, no pauses)

Students: Just capture the general idea

Questions:

1. How many customers surveyed? (500)
2. What % prefer online shopping? (78%)
3. What do customers value more? (free shipping)
4. What will findings influence? (marketing strategy)

THANK YOU

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