

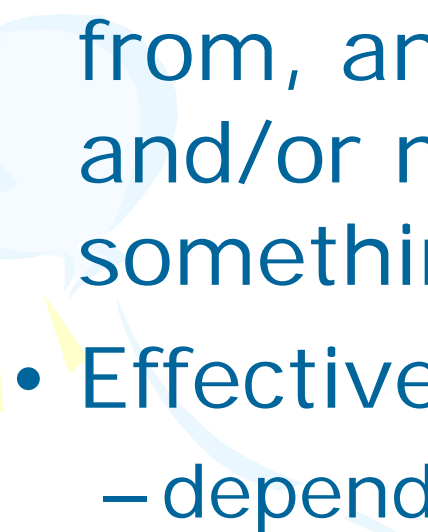

A cartoon character with a surprised expression, surrounded by colorful abstract shapes and a thought bubble. The character is a simple black-and-white drawing of a head with large eyes and a small mouth, looking upwards. It has one hand raised to its chin. The background is white with several colorful, abstract shapes: a large purple arrow-like shape on the left, a green curved shape at the top, a blue thought bubble on the right, and several yellow triangular shapes scattered around. The text "The Power of Active Listening" is centered in a bold, dark green font.

The Power of Active Listening



What is Listening?



- **Listening** (ILA, 1996): the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages; to hear something with thoughtful attention.
 - Effective communication is 2-way
 - depends on speaking and listening
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Listening vs. Hearing

- Hearing- physical process; natural; passive
- Listening- physical & mental process; active; learned process; a skill
- Listening is hard!

You must choose to participate in the process of listening.





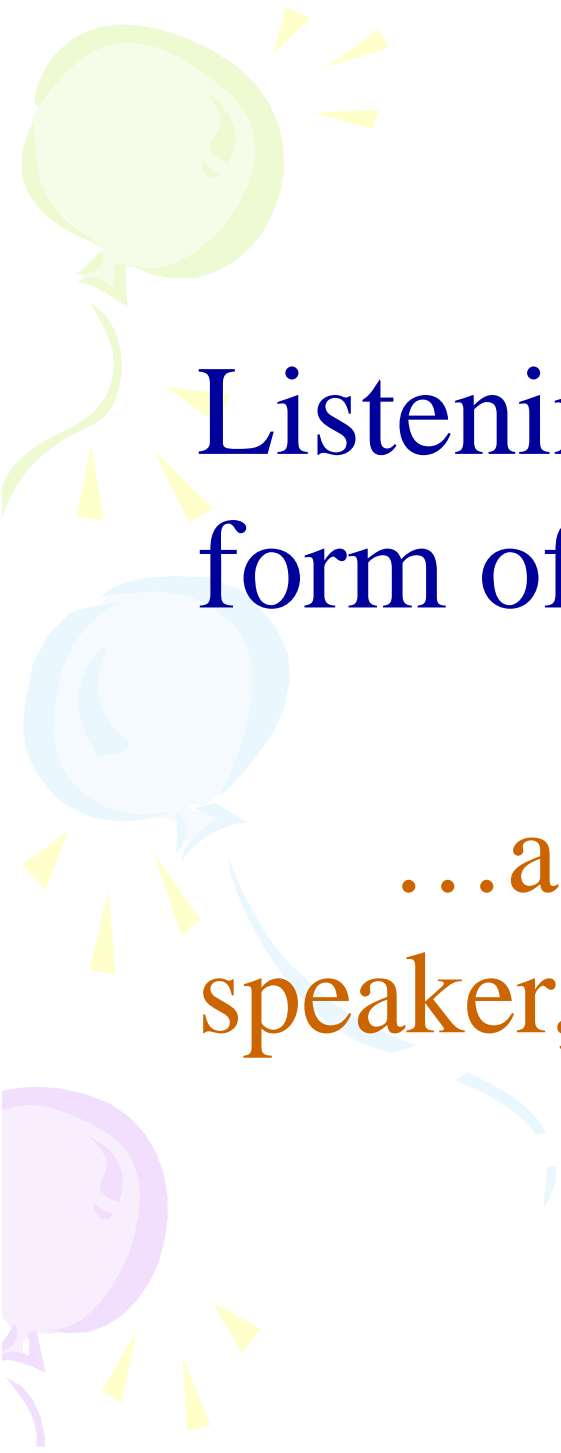
Fast Facts



- We listen at 125-250 wpm, think at 1000-3000 wpm.
- 75% of the time we are distracted, preoccupied or forgetful.
- 20% of the time, we remember what we hear.
- More than 35% of businesses think listening is a top skill for success.
- Less than 2% of people have had formal education with listening.

Percentage of Time We Spend on Each Type of Communication

| <u>Mode of Communication</u> | <u>Formal Years of Training</u> | <u>Percentage of Time Used</u> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Writing | 12 years | 9% |
| Reading | 6-8 years | 16 % |
| Speaking | 1-2 years | 30% |
| Listening | 0-few hours | 45% |



Listening is the most powerful
form of acknowledgment

...a way of saying to the
speaker, “You are important.”



Why Be A Good Listener?

The Needs of the Speaker...

- To be **recognized and remembered**
- To feel **valued**
- To feel **appreciated**
- To feel **respected**
- To feel **understood**
- To feel **comfortable** about a want or need



Barriers to Listening



- Equate With Hearing
- Uninteresting Topics
- Speaker's Delivery
- External Distractions
- Mentally Preparing Response
- Personal Concerns
- Personal Bias
- Language/Culture Differences
- Faking Attention

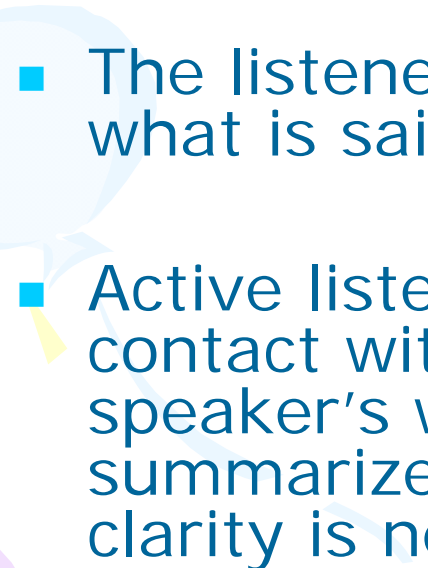

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide features three balloons: a light green one at the top, a light blue one in the middle, and a light purple one at the bottom. Each balloon has a string and several small yellow triangular shapes radiating from it, resembling sunbeams or confetti. The balloons are arranged vertically and partially overlap.

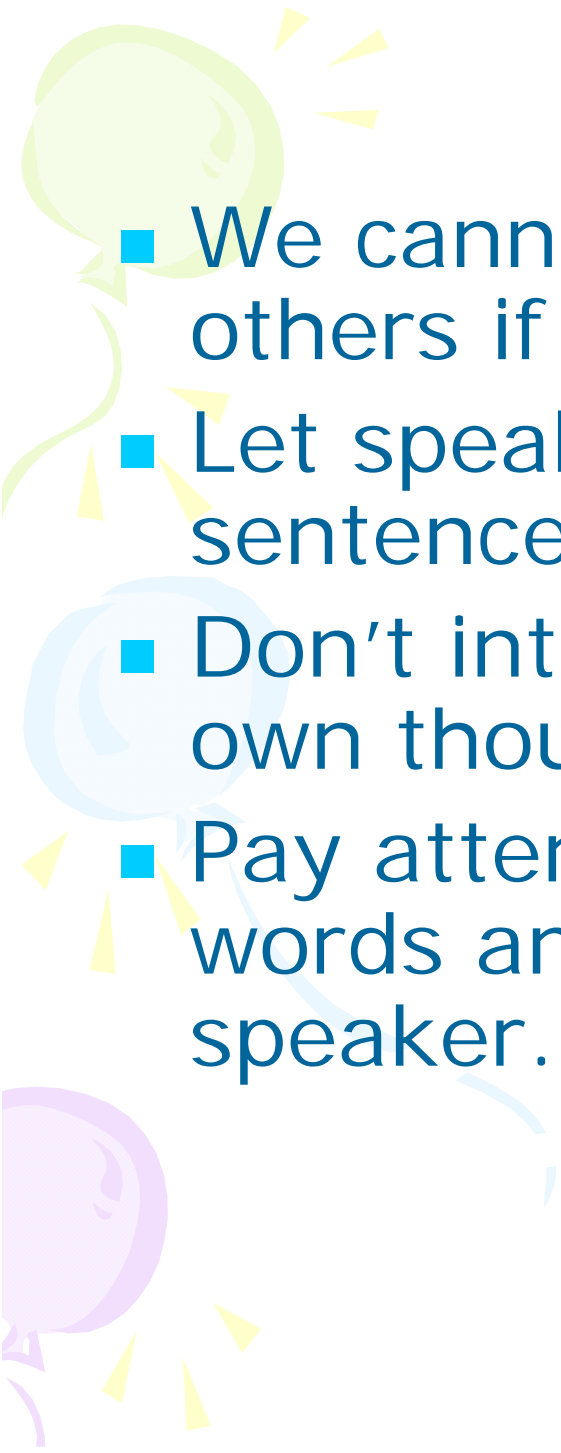
Bad Listening Habits

- Criticizing the subject or the speaker
- Listening only for facts
- Not taking notes OR outlining everything
- Tolerating or creating distraction
- Letting emotional words block message
- Wasting time difference between speed of speech and speed of thought



Active Listening Skills

- Effective listening is active participation in a conversation.
 - The listener must actually *hear* and not *assume* what is said.
 - Active listeners sit or stand alertly, maintain eye contact with the speaker, concentrate on the speaker's words, make verbal responses, and summarize parts of what has been said when clarity is needed.
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- A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide features three balloons: a light green one at the top, a light blue one in the middle, and a light purple one at the bottom. Each balloon is attached to a streamer and has several small yellow triangular flags trailing behind it.
- We cannot learn anything from others if we try to do all the talking.
 - Let speakers finish out their own sentences.
 - Don't interrupt them to interject your own thoughts.
 - Pay attention to the tone of the words and the nonverbal cues of the speaker.



Active Listening Requires...

- Definite Intent to Listen
- Focus on the Speaker
- Verbal and Non-Verbal Encouragers
- Feedback Loop to Insure Accuracy

Active Listening (3 Steps)

1. Listen
2. Question
3. Respond





Step 1: Listen

- To Feelings As Well As Words
 - Words – Emotions -- Implications
- Focus on Speaker
 - Don't plan, speak, or get distracted
- What Is Speaker Talking About?
 - Topic? Speaker? Listener? Others?
- Look At Speaker
- Use Verbal & Non-Verbal Encouragers



Step 2: Question

- 3 Purposes
 - Demonstrates you are listening
 - Gather information
 - Clarification
- Open-ended
 - Tell me more?
 - How did you feel?
 - Then what happened?



Step 3: Respond

- Reflect (In your words)
- Encourage more
- Summarize
- Clarify
- Validate



Reflecting

- Purpose

- To show that you understand how the person feels.

- Action

- Reflects the speaker's basic feelings.

- Example:

- "You seem very upset."





Encouraging

- Purpose

- To convey interest.

- To encourage the other person to keep talking.

- Action

- Don't agree or disagree.

- Use neutral words.

- Use varying voice intonations.

- Example

- "Can you tell me more...?"



Summarizing

- Purpose

- To review progress.
- To pull together important ideas and facts.
- To establish a basis for further discussion.



- Action

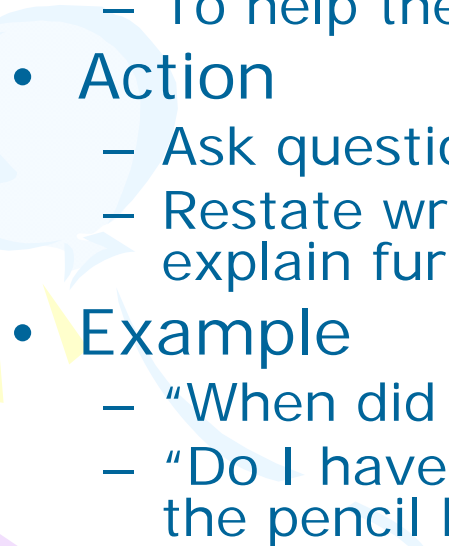

- Restate major ideas expressed, including feelings.

- Example

- “These seem to be the key ideas you’ve expressed...”
- 



Clarifying

- Purpose
 - To help you clarify what is said.
 - To get more information.
 - To help the speaker see other points of view.
 - Action
 - Ask questions.
 - Restate wrong interpretation to force the speaker to explain further.
 - Example
 - “When did this happen?”
 - “Do I have this right? You think he told you to give him the pencil because he doesn’t like you?”
- 
- 



Restating

- Purpose

- To show you are listening and understanding what is being said.
- To help the speaker see other points of view.

- Action

- Restate basic ideas and facts.

- Example

- “So you would like your friends to include you at recess, is that right?”
- 



Validating

- Purpose

- To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person.



- Action

- Acknowledge the value of their issues and feelings.

- Show appreciation for their efforts and actions.


- Example

- “I truly appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter.”





Exercise: Paraphrase

- Sit face to face with someone else.
 - Your partner says a short sentence, you listen to it, and render it back using similar words and sentence structure.
 - Rearrange words or substitute words to give the message back to you partner.
 - Ask the speaker if the message is still the same.
 - Ask your partner if you were able to paraphrase or if you are just repeating. If the speaker tells you that you are just repeating, dare to move words around and to replace them with synonyms until you can successfully paraphrase what your speaker said.
 - Take turns with your partner, practice this paraphrasing exercise until you both feel you are good at paraphrasing a message back.
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Exercise: Reflect

- This exercise requires your full concentration and attention.
- Sit face to face with a partner.
- First observe the facial expression, the mood, the gaze of the other person. Then ask your partner to give you a sentence for you to reflect back to her/him.
- Your partner tells you a sentence or two.
- You listen, understand, think about it and reflect it back to your partner using *your own* words.
- Ask your partner if you reflected the message correctly. Ask her/him if you were in tune with his feelings and mood.
- If you successfully completed this exercise, your (reflective) listening will make your partner feel *listened to and understood* by you.
- Keep doing these exercises, especially the reflective listening exercises, for as many times as you think it's needed to master this listening skill.