

Active Listening



The good Lord gave us two ears but
Only one mouth. Some people say
That's because he wanted us to
spend twice as much time listening
as talking. Others claim it's because he
knew listening was twice as hard
as talking.

12 TECHNIQUES TO LISTEN MORE EFFECTIVELY

1. Focus all your attention on the customer; turn off your own worries
2. Try to think like the other person, concentrate
3. Maintain eye contact
4. Limit your own talking
5. Listen for ideas not just words
6. Acknowledge the customer and don't interrupt
7. Gather information about the customer and ask questions
8. Sense non-verbal messages
9. React to ideas – Not to the person
10. Don't jump to conclusions
11. Use basic acknowledgments and summarize
12. Take notes on key points

Listening Inventory

Directions: Answer each statement with 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5.

- 1 = Very seldom
- 2 = Approximately 25% of the time
- 3 = Approximately 50% of the time
- 4 = Approximately 75% of the time
- 5 = Almost always

- _____ 1. I make people I am talking with comfortable by asking them to sit down.
- _____ 2. I listen to employees in informal, on-the-job situations as well as in planned meetings.
- _____ 3. I find that listening is hard work.
- _____ 4. I show a positive attitude toward others when they want to talk with me.
- _____ 5. I am careful not to prejudge the quality of people's ideas.
- _____ 6. I give the person talking with me my undivided attention.
- _____ 7. I am careful not to interrupt before the person is finished talking.
- _____ 8. I can easily distinguish between fact and opinion.
- _____ 9. I request more information when I do not fully understand.
- _____ 10. I restate the person's point of view when I do not fully understand (for example, "Your point is ..., " "You mean this").
- _____ 11. I do not become emotional when I hear others use emotionally toned words.
- _____ 12. People talking with me can honestly say, "He(she) heard me and understands me."
- _____ 13. I ask questions to be sure that I am hearing the message correctly.
- _____ 14. My employees feel equally free to give me negative reports as well as favorable ones.
- _____ 15. I consciously work at listening because I realize it develops a better understanding of others.

_____ Total Score

Listening Inventory: Scoring Key

- 70-75 A truly great listener. You can lead the group when we get to listening skills.
- 60-70 An excellent listener. You can take an extended coffee break when we get to listening skills.
- 50-60 A better-than-average listener. Your day could become a bit easier with enhanced listening skills.
- 40-50 An average listener. Choose one or two specific techniques to enhance your ability.
- Below 40 - You have come to the right place.