

Are you listening?

When interacting, people often are not listening attentively to one another. They may be distracted, thinking about other things, or thinking about what they are going to say next (the latter case is particularly true in conflict situations or disagreements)

1. Look at the person, and suspend other things you are doing.
2. Listen not merely to the words, but the feeling content.
3. Be sincerely interested in what the other person is talking about.
4. Restate what the person said.
5. Ask clarification questions once in a while.
6. Be aware of your own feelings and strong opinions.
7. If you have to state your views, say them only after you have listened.



Can you hear me now?!

How Good Are Your Communication Skills?

Speaking, Listening, Writing, and Reading Effectively

Communication skills are some of the most important skills that you need to succeed in life.

We talk to people face to face, and we listen when people talk to us. We write emails and reports, and we read the documents that are sent to us.

Communication, therefore, is a process that involves at least two people - a sender and a receiver. For it to be successful, the receiver must understand the message in the way that the sender intended.

This sounds quite simple. But have you ever been in a situation where this hasn't happened? Misunderstanding and confusion often occur, and they can cause enormous problems.

When you communicate well, you can be very successful.

Communication is key!



Are we communicating yet?

Test Your Listening Skills

Take this quiz to see how you rate as a listener. Begin by thinking of the last few serious conversations you've had, and do your best to answer these questions honestly.

1. When someone is sharing about a problem they are having I stop what I am doing and give them my full attention.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
2. I turn off my cell phone and limit distractions while someone is speaking to me.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
3. I make eye contact and completely face someone while they are talking to me.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
4. I wait until the other person is finished speaking before I speak, even if I already know what they are about to say.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
5. I watch facial expressions and body language for clues as to what the speaker is feeling and thinking.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
6. I carefully consider what I am about to say before speaking.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
7. I wait to fully understand the message before I begin to formulate my response.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely
8. I rephrase what was said in order to be sure I understood correctly what was said.
A)Usually B)Sometimes C)Rarely

The Results Are in...

Mostly A's

You are an empathetic listener. You are usually an excellent person to talk to and to confide in. Your friends probably really enjoy sharing their hearts with you and sharing their problems! Share this skill with others, not only to be a comfort to hurting friends, but to show others how they can listen more effectively. We learn empathetic listening best by seeing it modeled. Thanks for being a good example.

Mostly B's

Like most of us, you could use some improvement in the listening department. You're a fairly good listener in dire situations, but unless it is a really urgent matter, you've got better things to do. You've underestimated the importance of being a good listener and your personal relationships may suffer. Follow the tips below to become a more effective listener. Your friends and family will notice and appreciate the improvement.

Mostly C's

You could really use some improvement in the listening department. When you are listening to a friend, you think about how what they are saying affects you. You rehearse your response while you could be listening. You are more excited about what **you** are about to say than what you could be discovering about the speaker. Probably one of the most important things you will ever do for your personal relationships is to tackle this problem. The quiz should have been an eye opener for you. Here are some more secrets to effective listening.

