

## Listening (Speech: Chapter 3)

- I. Listening is More than Hearing
  - A. Listening is the “receiving” part of communication
    - a. Listening—“making a conscious effort to hear” Webster’s *New World Dictionary*
    - b. Listening is a skill
    - c. Only about 25% of what we hear is remembered
  - B. Listening with Time to Spare
    - a. People speak at about 120 – 180 words per minute
    - b. People listen at a rate 6 times faster than people can speak
    - c. Four Ways to Listen
      - i. Appreciative listening
        1. Listening to music appreciatively
        2. Listening to something in nature—bird, brook, crickets
      - ii. Discriminative listening
        1. Single out a sound in a noisy environment
        2. Listening to someone in a crowded room
      - iii. Empathic listening
        1. Encourages speaker to talk freely without embarrassment
        2. Accepts what is said, tries hard to understand, and makes no judgments; listens without offering solutions
        3. Practiced by counselors, psychiatrists, and good friends
      - iv. Critical listening
        1. Evaluate what they hear and determine if person’s message is logical / valuable
        2. Should be practiced in school
    - d. Why Listening Matters
      - i. Good listeners are more popular than speakers
      - ii. Listening is a thinking skill
- II. Roadblocks to Good Listening
  - A. A Small Price to Pay
    - a. Pay our time, interest, and effort in exchange for information, entertainment, and maybe comfort
    - b. Exercise judgment
      - i. Spoken word is more powerful than written word
      - ii. Professional persuaders—politicians, advertisers, and con artists know this too
  - B. Why is Listening Difficult?

- a. Human desire to speak
- b. Short attention spans
- C. Bad Habits Make for Bad Company
  - a. 7 deadly habits of bad listening
    - i. Turning out dull topics
      - 1. Find **something** interesting about the topic to listen to/for
    - ii. Faking attention
      - 1. Manners teach us to be polite
      - 2. Create a mental paraphrase to keep your attention
      - 3. Repeat key words/phrases to yourself
    - iii. Yielding to distractions
      - 1. Focus on the speaker not other noises around you
    - iv. Criticizing delivery or physical appearance
      - 1. Don't judge a book by its cover
      - 2. Overlook looks and ticks of a speaker; focus on the message
    - v. Jumping to conclusions
      - 1. Don't judge until you know the speaker's position
      - 2. Don't let bias, prejudice, stereotyping make you lose the message
    - vi. Overreacting to emotional words
      - 1. Keep emotions in check with hot topics
      - 2. Stay focused
      - 3. Wait until speaker finishes; then decide how to respond
    - vii. Interrupting
      - 1. Listen rather than think of a response
  - b. Filters that distort
    - i. Refrain from judging or evaluating the speaker
    - ii. Focus your attention on the message
    - iii. Search for areas where you agree
    - iv. Keep an open mind
    - v. Be patient
    - vi. Pay closer attention to body language
    - vii. Hold your temper when you disagree
    - viii. Try hard to put yourself in the speaker's shoes
    - ix. Learn what your filters are and work hard to overcome them in order to be a better listener

### III. Effective Listening Strategies

- A. A little knowledge and a lot of practice can make you a good listener
  - a. Stay alert on several fronts at once—total body listening
  - b. Know the organization of the speech/speaker
- B. The Beginning
  - a. Do not hang on to introduction—it is meant to hook you, but then the body of the speech may bore you
  - b. Consider the topic, the title, and make predictions about the speech
  - c. Search for you hypothetical topic—did you guess correctly?
- C. The Middle
  - a. Be a critical listener
  - b. Understand the speaker’s message and intent
  - c. Question the support
  - d. Questions relevance of support
  - e. Question sources
  - f. Question bias in speech
- D. The End
  - a. Be on guard for emotional appeals and propaganda—material designed to distort the truth
  - b. Know it’s the end when speaker repeats the main idea, summarizes main points, or says “in conclusion”
  - c. Look for rhetorical devices—tricks of language
    - i. Testimonials
    - ii. False comparisons
    - iii. Suggestions to jump on the bandwagon
  - d. Ask yourself “did the speaker earn the support he/she is requesting?”
- E. Use Your Listening “Spare Time” to Advantage
  - a. Explore—predict future of speech
  - b. Analyze—message well supported with good sources and fair language?
  - c. Review—mentally review speakers points
  - d. Search for hidden meanings—read between the lines
    - i. Is the speaker leaving something out?
    - ii. Watch body language and nonverbal communication
  - e. Handy acronym (EARS—Explore, Analyze, Review, Search)
- F. A Good Listener Will . . .
  - a. Provide encouragement
  - b. Ask for Explanations
    - i. Remain positive

- ii. Do not criticize speaker's ability to explain, instead say something like "Are you saying . . ." or "I'm not sure that I understand." or "Could you be more specific?"
- c. Paraphrase the Message
- d. Summarize the Message
- e. Put it down on Paper
  - i. Be prepared with paper and pen
  - ii. Get it down quickly—do not take time to be neat
  - iii. Use shorthand