

FUNDAMENTALS OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION

ACTIVE LISTENING



OVERVIEW

It's not by chance that attentive listeners are admired and valued. Consequently, if one of your workplace objectives is to gain respect, appreciation, or admiration, then mastering listening skills is essential!

The listening process involves a sender (the individual who transmits the information) and a receiver (the person who perceives and processes the information).

The sender (or communicator) provides information to the receiver that must be clear, brief, and direct. That is, it needs to be easily understood. The receiver is the message recipient. The receiver's responsibility is to process the sender's communication, both spoken and unspoken, with minimal distortion.



CHALLENGES OF LISTENING

Listening is challenging because everything expressed passes through (or is filtered by) the recipient's individual experiences (communication filters) or, as explored further, the communication obstacles. These filters start forming from birth and arise from life experiences and both verbal and nonverbal signals. Communication challenges specific to listening include the following.



COMMUNICATION PERCEPTIONS

Language and actions can be readily misunderstood or removed from context. A skilled communicator consistently considers how the audience views them and remains mindful of tone and physical demeanor. Frequently, a communicator who comes across as patronizing or pompous will prompt the audience to withdraw from the dialogue.



COMMUNICATION MISCONCEPTIONS

An individual's life background shapes their perspectives. As a result, it influences how that individual interprets your communication. Posing questions to comprehend where someone originates from or what information they're utilizing to develop an opinion is called the "discovery" process. This concept of appreciating someone's life background underscores the significance of the discovery element of every interaction because it helps prevent misinterpreting someone's message through your own experiences.

For instance, suppose you were raised in surroundings where individuals who speak loudly also tend toward anger. In that scenario, when you meet someone who loudly declares, "I WANT TO ASK YOU A QUESTION," you might presume the hidden message is that individual is upset about something you did.

You'll recognize you've misinterpreted someone's intention when that individual becomes emotional or distressed or says things like, "That's not what I intended!" or "Why are you becoming so defensive?" Understanding as much as feasible about how someone thinks and feels may influence the language you select when communicating with various audiences.

FACT VS. OPINION

When engaging in active listening, notice whether individuals present an opinion as truth. Presenting an opinion as fact is deceptive. This explains why including facts (and their origins) whenever feasible when transitioning from listener to speaker is important.

Don't present your opinion as fact because the listener might possess factual information contradicting what you've expressed or may conclude (based on their perceptions) that you're being dishonest. This step is essential in obtaining successful results from any conversation because facts are necessary to support opinions and conclusions.





ACTIVE LISTENING

CONNECT WITH US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



<https://linktr.ee/wkuacdc>



careerhelp@wku.edu