

Assessing Your Listening Habits

The following inventory is a self-assessment tool to help you identify how well and how often you practice good listening habits. Circle the number that best corresponds to your current practice, with 1 representing seldom, 3 representing usually, and 5 representing almost always. In the Comments/Actions space note what steps you might take to improve your listening habits.

Good Listening Habit	Current Level of Practice					Comments/Action
I avoid the tendency to make assumptions or let my personal feelings about others or what they say interfere with my ability to listen	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to decide ahead of time that others don't know what they are talking about.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to decide ahead of time that others are going to attack, making me too defensive to really listen.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to get over stimulated to the point of preparing a rebuttal while others are talking.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I hold back on making judgments about others or what they are saying until I have listened and tried my best to understand from their perspective.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to determine ahead of time that my mind is set and that what others have to say is irrelevant	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to decide ahead of time that what others are saying is uninteresting, too difficult to understand, or unimportant.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to listen only for what I want or expect to hear as opposed to all of what others are saying.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
I avoid the tendency to daydream, tune out, or fake attention to others when what they are saying seems either too difficult to understand or irrelevant to me.	1	2	3	4	5	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

I listen not only for the obvious. I pay attention to the verbal and nonverbal messages being sent and to the factual and emotional content.

1 2 3 4 5

I listen with my entire body. Relaxed body positions and lack of eye contact (during face-to-face communication) are not conducive to effective listening.

1 2 3 4 5

Whenever possible, I do something about the distractions and interruptions that might be making it difficult for me to listen.

1 2 3 4 5

I listen with empathy, I attempt to put myself in others' shoes.

1 2 3 4 5

I listen actively. I reflect back on what has been said in my own words to indicate my understanding of what others have said and felt.

1 2 3 4 5
