

Noise and Interference

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about factors that can interfere with communication. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. What Are Noise and Interference?
2. Learning How to Tune It All Out

1. What Are Noise and Interference?



Typically, you know it when you hear it. **Noise** may be jarring and unpleasant and is usually an interruption or distraction when it occurs. Noise and interference block the sending or receiving of a message. When it comes to public speaking, noise and interference can be a major issue for both you as message sending and for your audience as your message receivers. Quite simply, noise jams the signal you're trying to send as you speak.

Noise and interference can be both external or internal. It could be your microphone feeding back through a speaker, causing that ear-splitting high pitch squeal. You could be trying to talk over an auditorium full of chatty high schoolers. Or you could be giving a speech outdoors on a windy day and you're barely able to shout over the sound of the wind.

Internal noise and interference can be particularly challenging since this often refers to the internal monologue you might be telling yourself before you get up on stage to speak: *"I'm not good enough. I'm going to forget my speech. They're going to boo me."* Internal noise can be psychological and semantic in nature, whereas external noise can be known as or include physical and physiological noise. Often, internal noise and interference are the results of anxiety, nervousness, or stress.

Whether internal or external, unless you're giving your speech in a vacuum, noise is unavoidable. Noise exists at all levels of communication and thus, no message is received exactly as the sender intends (despite his or her best efforts) because of the ever-presence of noise in communication.



TERM TO KNOW

Noise

Various sounds, usually unwanted.

2. Learning How to Tune It All Out

With regard to external noise, double check to see if there are any ways to boost your volume. You might need to physically project your voice a little more to be heard over a low din. You might even need to call attention to yourself so that your audience pays attention. And it's okay to ask your audience before you speak: "Can you hear me in the back?"

As for internal noise, fear is the enemy. If you're nervous about speaking, take a few moments before presenting to inhale some nice, deep breaths for a count of four: in through the nose for four, blow it out through the mouth for four. Repeat this until you can feel your heart rate slow down a little and the butterflies in your stomach settle down. You *can* do this!



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **noise** exists in all aspects of communication; thus, no message is received exactly as the sender intends (despite his or her best efforts). Noise can be both external and internal. External noise often relates to your physical environment, such as a noisy room, as well as your physiological state. Internal noise includes psychological and semantic noise and is how you prevent yourself from effectively delivering your message.

There are several methods you can use to help **tune out noise**. To combat external noise, speak louder or see if you can be amplified in some way. Alternatively, see if the source of the noise can be stopped or lowered. To triumph over internal noise, take a few deep breaths before speaking. Breathe out all of the negative self-doubt and anxieties you may have about speaking, and inhale confidence.

Source: Source: Boundless. "Noise and Interference." Boundless Communications Boundless, 27 Feb. 2017. Retrieved 26 Jun. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/introduction-to-public-speaking-1/elements-of-speech-communication-21/noise-and-interference-101-8002/>



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