

Rules to Follow When Listening

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the important guidelines to follow as a listener. Specifically, this lesson will focus on:

1. Rules to Follow When Listening
 - a. Courtesy
 - b. Attention
 - c. Open-Mindedness

1. Rules to Follow When Listening

You may not always be the speech presenter or speaker. Many times, you'll be in the audience yourself. **Active listening** is a skill that can make you a more effective speaker in the long run.



TERM TO KNOW

Active Listening

The process of attending carefully to what a speaker is saying, involving such techniques as accurately paraphrasing the speaker's remarks.

1a. Courtesy

Being an active listener not only makes you a more engaged audience member but, quite simply, it's polite. If you expect people to pay attention to your words when it's your turn to speak, they expect the same from you.

There are a number of other courteous behaviors that an active listener should practice:

- Look at the presenter.
- Do not text or chat on your phone while they speak.
- Remain quiet.
- If taking notes, either on paper or via a laptop or tablet, do so unobtrusively.

1b. Attention

Active listening refers to the practice of not just hearing someone, but really listening and paying attention to what they have to say. Intrinsic to active listening is the ability to feed back what has been said to the speaker, often in the form of paraphrasing.

As an audience member, you might not have the opportunity to actually verbalize these feedback in the moment; however, a true active listener is able to summarize at the completion of the speech.

1c. Open-Mindedness

You may not necessarily agree with everything that is being said. It's important to come to the presentation with an **open mind**— that is, to at least listen with respect and courtesy to ideas that may be in conflict with your own personal beliefs and values.

Again, if you expect others to be open and receptive to your ideas, you must extend that same courtesy to others.



TERM TO KNOW

Open-Mindedness

Willing to consider new and different ideas or opinions.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that as an audience member, it is important to practice certain **rules for listening**. Presenters deserve your **attention**, **courtesy**, and **open-mindedness** if you are to expect the same of others once you get up to present. Be courteous by silencing your cell phone or other gadgets, refraining from extraneous noise, and looking at the presenter while they speak. If you're taking notes, make sure you're doing so in an unobtrusive way. Have an open mind about what material is presented to you. You may not agree, but the presenter still deserves your attention and courtesy.

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TERMS TO KNOW

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Willing to consider new and different ideas or opinions.