

Technology

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the impact of a speaker's use of technology on the audience. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Technological Distractions

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Everyone has experienced the benefits **technology** can provide to the listening experience. Hearing aid technology can help those who are hard of hearing more easily engage in a conversation or listen to a lecture. Electronic presentations can incorporate photographs, sounds, charts, guided outlines, and other features to help maintain audience attention and clarify or demonstrate complicated ideas. An engaged audience member is more likely to pay attention to the material and therefore listen more actively to a presentation.

When not used properly, however, technology can become a barrier to effective listening. Poor or outdated equipment can malfunction, causing disruptions to the listening process. If a conversation is taking place via an electronic medium, problems with technology (like a buzzing phone line or slow Internet connection) can likewise limit communication. In a non-virtual setting, excessive or unnecessary audio/visual components to a technological presentation can become distracting, particularly if they are directly related to the message being communicated by the person making the presentation.

Beyond technology being utilized by the presenter, technology used by the listener can also hinder effective listening. Taking lecture notes on a laptop is convenient, but it is also convenient to check Facebook or the latest sports scores. Cell phones and tablets can provide similar distractions. If someone in the audience is talking or texting during the speech, technology becomes a major distraction for everyone involved.

Ultimately, the onus lies with both the speaker and the listener to anticipate potential technological problems or distractions to the listening process, and to do what they can to eliminate or mitigate their effects. Technology should simplify communication, not make it more complicated.

Speakers can avoid distractions caused by technology by doing the following:

1. Before the presentation, the speaker should silence his or her cell phone or any other device that might make noise and provide an interruption.
2. The audience should do the same. The speaker has the right to request that the audience comply with

his or her desire to have a distraction-free environment.

3. If using technology as part of the presentation, the speaker should do a test run to make sure that everything is set up properly to avoid malfunction later during the speech.
4. If possible, the speaker should do a sound check. Amplified or not, at the beginning of the speech, the speaker should ask, "Can you hear me in the back?" or something to that effect.
5. The speech should not include too many sources of visual stimulation such as visual aids, PowerPoints, charts, laser pointers, etc. This can actually cause a message overload for the audience as they try to divide their attention between what they hear and what they see.



TERM TO KNOW

Technology

A device, material, or sequence of mathematical coded electronic instructions created by a person's mind that is built, assembled, or produced and which is not part of the natural world.



SUMMARY

Technology can help the audience listen to the speech's message by making them physically able to hear the speaker's words, such as through electronic amplification; however, **technology has the potential to be distracting**. Malfunctioning technological equipment can disrupt the listening process. Personal electronics like laptops and cell phones can distract listeners from a speaker, particularly when used by audience members during the presentation. Do not be afraid to do a test run of any and all technology that will be used during the presentation to ensure it works smoothly when the time comes. Before the beginning of the speech, both the speaker and the audience should silence their cell phones or other noise-making devices.

Source: Source: Boundless. "Technology." Boundless Communications Boundless, 2 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 28 Jun. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/learning-to-listen-and-helping-others-do-the-same-5/barriers-to-listening-31/technology-142-8390/>



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