

The Importance of Listening

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the listening process and its importance in effective communication. Specifically, this lesson will focus on:

1. Listening Is More Than Just Hearing
2. Active Listening

1. Listening Is More Than Just Hearing



Listening is a skill of critical significance in all aspects of our lives— from maintaining our personal

relationships, to getting our jobs done, to taking notes in class, to figuring out which bus to take to the airport. Regardless of how we're engaged with listening, it's important to understand that listening involves more than just hearing the words that are directed at us. Listening is an active process by which we make sense of, assess, and respond to what we hear.

The listening process involves five stages:

1. Receiving
2. Understanding
3. Evaluating
4. Remembering
5. Responding

These stages will be discussed in more detail in later lessons. Basically, an effective listener must:

- Hear and identify the speech sounds directed toward them.
- Understand the message of those sounds.
- Critically evaluate or assess that message.
- Remember what's been said.
- Respond (either verbally or nonverbally) to information they've received.

Effectively engaging with all five stages of the listening process lets us best gather the information we need from the world around us.



Listening

The active process by which we make sense of, assess, and respond to what we hear.

2. Active Listening

Active listening is a particular communication technique that requires the listener to provide feedback on what he or she hears to the speaker, by way of restating or paraphrasing what they have heard in their own words. The goal of this repetition is to confirm what the listener has heard and to confirm the understanding of both parties.

The ability to actively listen demonstrates sincerity, and that nothing is being assumed or taken for granted. Active listening is most often used to improve personal relationships, reduce misunderstanding and conflicts, strengthen cooperation, and foster understanding.

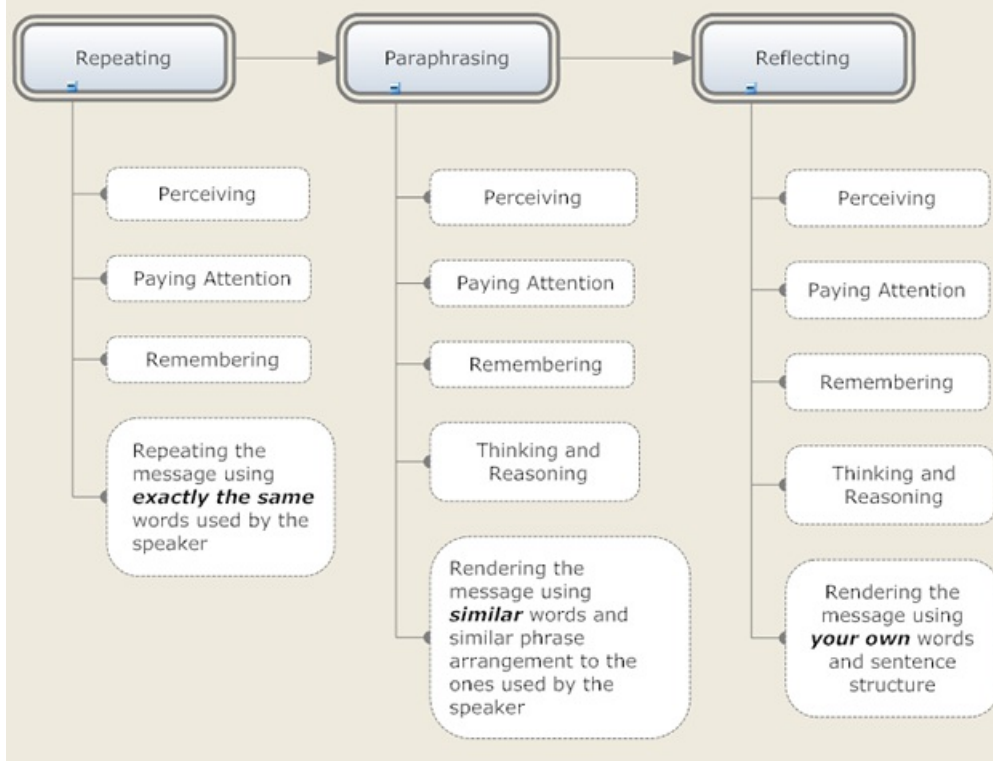
When engaging with a particular speaker, a listener can use several degrees of active listening, each resulting in a different quality of communication with the speaker.

This active listening chart shows three main degrees of listening:

- Repeating
- Paraphrasing

- Reflecting

Degrees of Active Listening



Active listening can also involve paying attention to the speaker's behavior and body language. Having the ability to interpret a person's body language lets the listener develop a more accurate understanding of the speaker's message.

TERM TO KNOW

Active Listening

A particular communication technique that requires the listener to provide feedback on what he or she hears to the speaker.

SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **listening is more than just hearing**. The listening process involves five stages: receiving, understanding, evaluating, remembering, and responding. **Active listening** is a particular communication technique that requires the listener to provide feedback on what he or she hears to the speaker. Three main degrees of active listening are repeating, paraphrasing, and reflecting.

Source: Source: Boundless. "The Importance of Listening." Boundless Communications Boundless, 27 Feb. 2017. Retrieved 27 Jun. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/learning-to-listen-and-helping-others-do-the-same-5/understanding-listening-29/the-importance-of-listening-132-8285/>

**Active Listening**

A particular communication technique that requires the listener to provide feedback on what he or she hears to the speaker.

Listening

The active process by which we make sense of, assess, and respond to what we hear.