

The Responding Stage

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about one of the stages in the listening process. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. The Responding Stage

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The **responding stage** is the stage of the listening process wherein the listener provides verbal and/or nonverbal reactions based on short- or long-term memory. Following the remembering stage, a listener can respond to what they hear either verbally or non-verbally.

Nonverbal signals can include gestures such as nodding, making eye contact, tapping a pen, fidgeting, scratching or cocking their head, smiling, rolling their eyes, grimacing, or any other body language. These kinds of responses can be displayed purposefully or involuntarily. Responding verbally might involve asking a question, requesting additional information, redirecting or changing the focus of a conversation, cutting off a speaker, or repeating what a speaker has said back to her in order to verify that the received message matches the intended message.

Nonverbal responses like nodding or eye contact allow the listener to communicate their level of interest without interrupting the speaker, thereby preserving the speaker/listener roles. When a listener responds verbally to what they hear and remember - for example, with a question or a comment - the speaker/listener roles are reversed, at least momentarily.

Responding adds action to the listening process, which would otherwise be an outwardly passive process. Oftentimes, the speaker looks for verbal and nonverbal responses from the listener to determine if and how their message is being understood and/or considered. Based on the listener's responses, the speaker can choose to either adjust or continue with the delivery of her message.

➦ **EXAMPLE** If a listener's brow is furrowed and their arms are crossed, the speaker may determine that she needs to lighten their tone to better communicate their point. If a listener is smiling and nodding or asking questions, the speaker may feel that the listener is engaged and her message is being communicated effectively.



TERM TO KNOW

Responding Stage

The listening stage wherein the listener provides verbal and/or nonverbal reactions to what she hears.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **the responding stage** is when the speaker looks for responses from the listener to determine if her message is being understood and/or considered. When a listener responds verbally to what she hears, the speaker/listener roles are reversed. Based on the listener's responses, the speaker can choose to either adjust or continue with the delivery of her message.

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TERMS TO KNOW

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The listening stage wherein the listener provides verbal and/or nonverbal reactions to what she hears.