

Want to Improve Your Listening Skills? Know the Eight Principles - Part II

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In our first part, we discussed about how important effective listening is and how listening is not the same as hearing. We started with the three principles of listening:

- a) Talk less, listen more
- b) Focus, concentrate
- c) Express

Now, let's look at other principles of listening to get a grip on improving our English speaking further.

Actively deal with distractions

Suppose you are attending a training session in your office and suddenly you notice your mind is wandering away. What are the signs? You start to look out of the window, toss a paper ball, notice the movements made by your colleagues, etc. These all are signs that your listening process is disturbed and you are getting bored.

What to do then? Actively deal with the distractions. The awareness that you are not paying attention is the warning sign to get rid of distracting thoughts and focus back.

Actively deal with distractions

No doubt that active listening will keep you alert, but there are times when a speaker would take a long pause. However, you need to be patient. Don't let your concentration waver; let the speaker take his own time. Sometimes, the pause is purposely given to let the audience infer the key points of the discussion. So, use that time to infer the main ideas of the discussion.

Empathize

One of the key factors in developing effective listening skills is to empathize with the speaker. Try and get his point of view. An open mind is what you need to empathize with the speaker. Another important thing to practice is to listen with your heart, as then you can listen more clearly.

Practice is the key

Patience and practice is the key to [learning English](#) and for that matter any new skill. Therefore, practice, practice and then practice more. Every time you are involved in a conversation, practice effective listening skills. There is no better time to start than today and there is no better conversation than this one. This is the mantra that will take you ahead.

Pay attention to the tone

One of the best ways to [improve vocabulary](#) is to hear each and every word the speaker is saying, along with the tone in which it is being said. Both, the volume and the tone are important to effective communication. If a speaker is talking about motivation in a dull tone, nobody would pay heed. A message when communicated in the right tone and volume with enthusiasm gets audience attentiveness.

All in all, effective listening starts from within a person. If you want to become a pro in English speaking, you have to be good at listening. It's all interrelated. Therefore, put a finger on your lips and start your journey to become a good listener and eventually a good English speaker.

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