

# CRITICAL LISTENING AND FEEDBACK

COMMUNICATION PROCESSES FOR  
WORKPLACE SUCCESS

## COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE = INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS



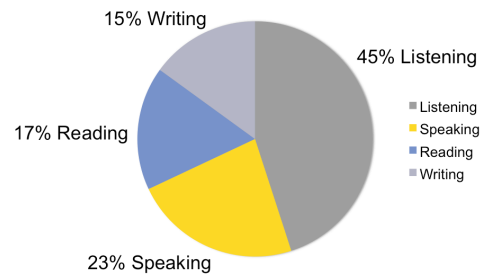
CEOs from 5,000 US companies were asked “what are the three most important things you have learned to perform your role as an executive?” Communication was number one!

98% of Fortune 500 vice believe that communication skills affected their advancement to a top executive position. So, effective communication skills (oral, written, interpersonal) are absolutely integral to employee success.

Communication is also important for organizational success. Some CEOs report that effective communication skills yield a higher return on investment and higher return on sales.

At HP and GE, communication is strongly related to productivity and retention.

## YOU SPEND THE MOST TIME LISTENING

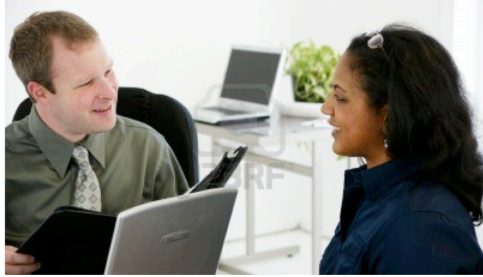


Of the 45% of time you spend listening on a daily basis, approximately 30% is spent listening to mass media, while 15% is spent listening face-to-face.

## NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ENGINEERING ACCENTUATES THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

...(we) envision a world where **communication is enabled by an ability to listen effectively** as well as to communicate through oral, visual, and written mechanisms (p.55)

**POOR LISTENING IS THE #1 REASON FOR FAILURE DURING AN INTERVIEW**



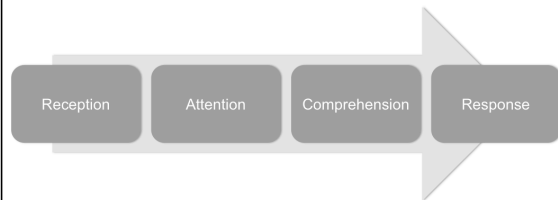
**COLLEGE STUDENTS PLACE LOW IMPORTANCE ON CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**



You are constantly connected, so this technology based connection is what you value and what you are comfortable with.

Instead, you need develop your communication, management, and leadership skills, perhaps even more than people from other generations because of your reliance on technology.

## THE PROCESS OF LISTENING



### STEP 1: RECEPTION



This is the initial step in the listening process and it involves both the auditory and the visual message. In addition to actually hearing, you observe a person's facial expressions, posture, movement, and appearance, all of which can offer important cues that may not be obvious merely by listening to the message.

## STEP 2: ATTENTION

45 seconds

10 minutes

125-150 words

500-600 words

Paying attention is hard! Your attention is divided between what you are attempting to listen to and what is currently happening in the rest of the environment and what else is going on in your mind. Perhaps people are whispering around, maybe there is noise in the hallway, maybe you are worried about a test you have later today. Your attention is pulled in many different directions.

Your attention span rarely lasts more than 45 seconds at a time!

But let's say you're able to pay attention and tune everything else out.

Your ability to focus is severely limited. In fact, research has shown that most people cannot remain attentive beyond a 10 minute time frame. The speculated reason is tv viewing.

So, concentration is one of the most difficult tasks we have as listeners. Motivation plays a HUGE role on activating this skill. Simply wanting to listen will go a long way toward helping you concentrate.

Two other factors that influence your concentration are interest level and difficulty of the message. Even if a message is boring or difficult, you will be motivated to listen if you will be tested on the material even if we might tend to tune in and out

## STEP 3: COMPREHENSION



Perceiving and processing (or assigning meaning)

Our comprehension is impacted by many factors, including physical and mental state, educational experience, background, culture, attitudes, beliefs, and values.

## MINIMIZE OBSTACLES TO LISTENING



Obstacles to listening occur throughout the entire process, when we are receiving a message, focusing attention, and assigning meaning.

Obstacles are also external and internal.

common obstacles to listening include: the external physical environment, the entertainment factor, bias or connotations, rushing to judgment about the speaker or the issue.

## CRITICAL LISTENING = COMPREHENDING AND EVALUATING

- Prepare to listen
- Consider credibility
- Consider arguments, evidence, and appeals
- Take note of assumptions
- Pay attention to what is not said

Listening takes a conscious effort. Plan to spend time focused on whatever or whomever you are listening to. (And avoid distractions or multitasking!)

While we're on the subject of multitasking...research shows that the brain focuses on things sequentially and not on two things at once. The brain must disengage with one activity in order to engage with another. John Medina, the author of "Brain Rules", a molecular biologist, and Professor of Bioengineering says, that to put it bluntly, we are incapable of multitasking. AND, not only can we not do it, but attempting to do it adversely affects credibility. You look disinterested and dismissive of the group and task at hand.

## STEP 5: VERBAL AND NONVERBAL RESPONSE

Describe-Evaluate-Prescribe

Be specific, concrete, and offer reasons

Nonverbal responses communicate a great deal during the interaction. As a listener, you can provide feedback about the way you are processing a message through your facial expressions, you can communicate level of attention and interest through your posture.

During and after the interaction, you can respond, ask questions, and provide feedback.

When providing feedback, remember to describe, evaluate, and prescribe whenever possible. Description is simple identification of behavior. Evaluation provides an assessment of behavior, and prescription goes one step further and offers advice or recommendation for how to they should behave in the future.

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## **PRESENTATION SELF ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATIONS**

Address strengths and opportunities for improvement

Describe-evaluate-prescribe

Address content, organization, visuals, and delivery

Include recommendations for future presentations (3950)

Organize, edit, and proofread!