

Listening Skills

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The Association of
Accountants and
Financial Professionals
in Business

Featured Presenter

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Course Goal and Agenda

- Introduction
- Listening Basics
- Overcoming Barriers to Listening
- Listening and Leadership
- Close

The **goal of this course** is to explore how you can be a more effective leader through listening.



Learning Objectives

AFTER THIS SESSION, ATTENDEES WILL BE ABLE TO:



DEFINE

Listening and its value for effective communication.



DESCRIBE

Barriers to effective listening and list strategies for overcoming them.



IDENTIFY

Different types of listening and the appropriate settings for each.



EXPLAIN

Why listening is an important skill for leaders and what strategies good listeners implement to strengthen their teams and organizations.



Reflection



1

How would you define **listening**?

2

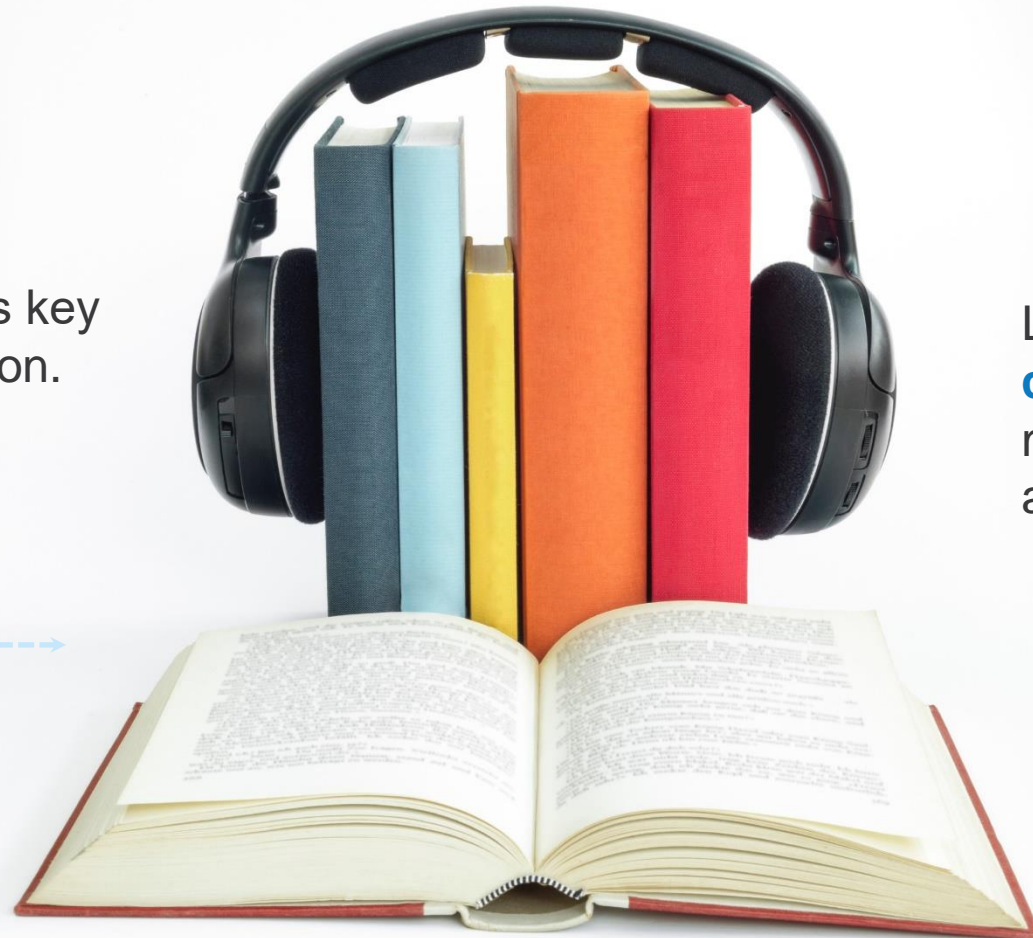
Describe an **experience** where the presence of or lack of good listening skills made a definite difference in the situation.



LISTENING BASICS

Listening Defined

Listening is the ability to **accurately receive and interpret** messages in the communication process. It's key to all effective communication.



Listening requires **focus and concentrated effort**, both mental and sometimes physical as well.

Active Listening



1

[Active] Listening means paying attention not only to the story, but how it's told, the use of language and voice, and how the other person uses his or her body. In other words, it means being aware of both verbal and nonverbal messages.

2

Active listening is an art, a skill, and a discipline that takes a high degree of self-control.

3

Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that builds a mutual understanding. It requires you to focus on the other person with all your senses.

Poll Question #1

In a **conversation** between two people, which role do you think controls the conversation?

- A. The person doing the most talking.
- B. The person doing the most listening.
- C. They control things equally.



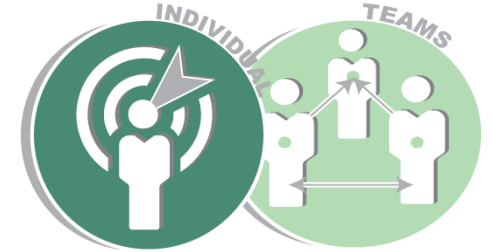
Poll Question #1 Results

Benefits of Listening

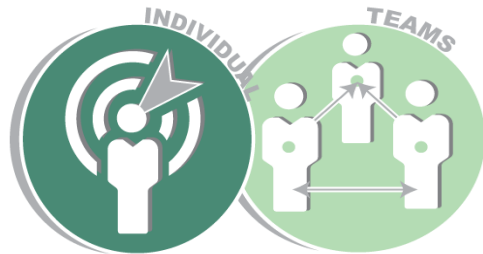
- Learn More



- Accomplish more



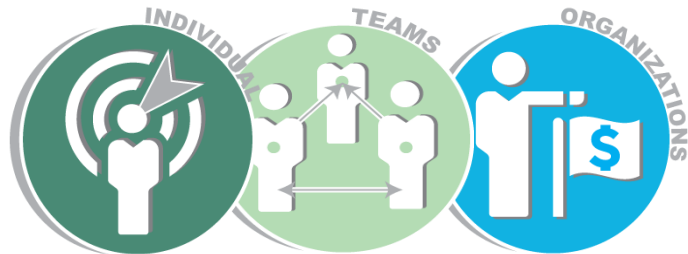
- Save time



- Save (or make) money



- Motivate people



Some Stats About Listening

85%

of what we know, we have learned through listening.

Humans generally listen at a

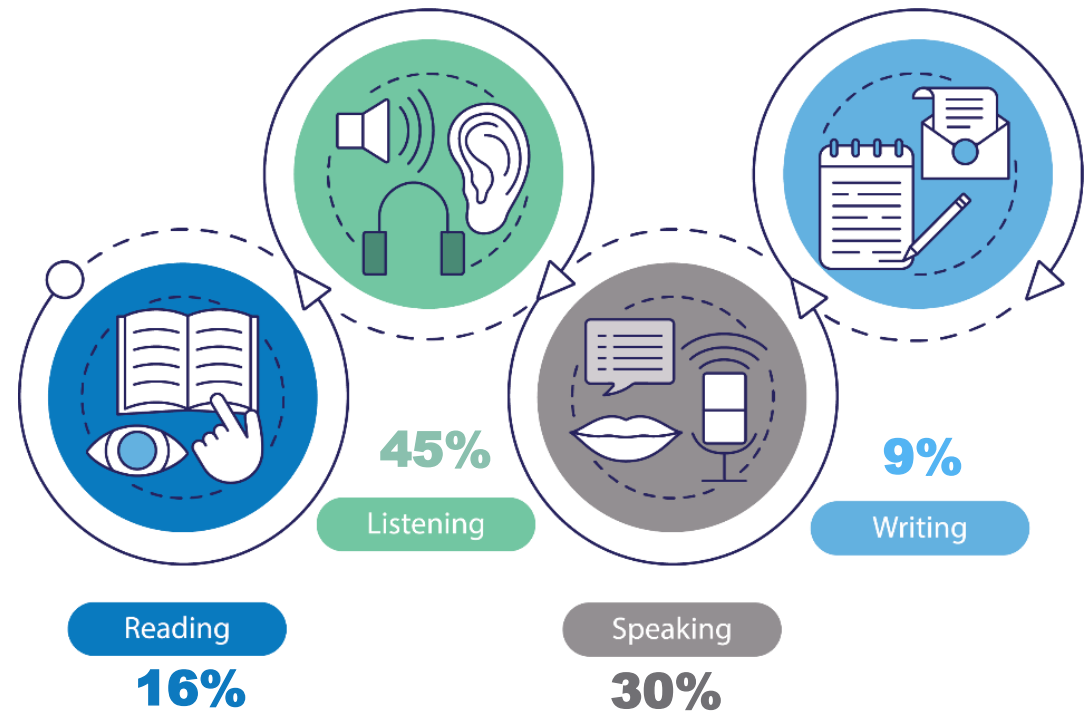
25%

comprehension rate.

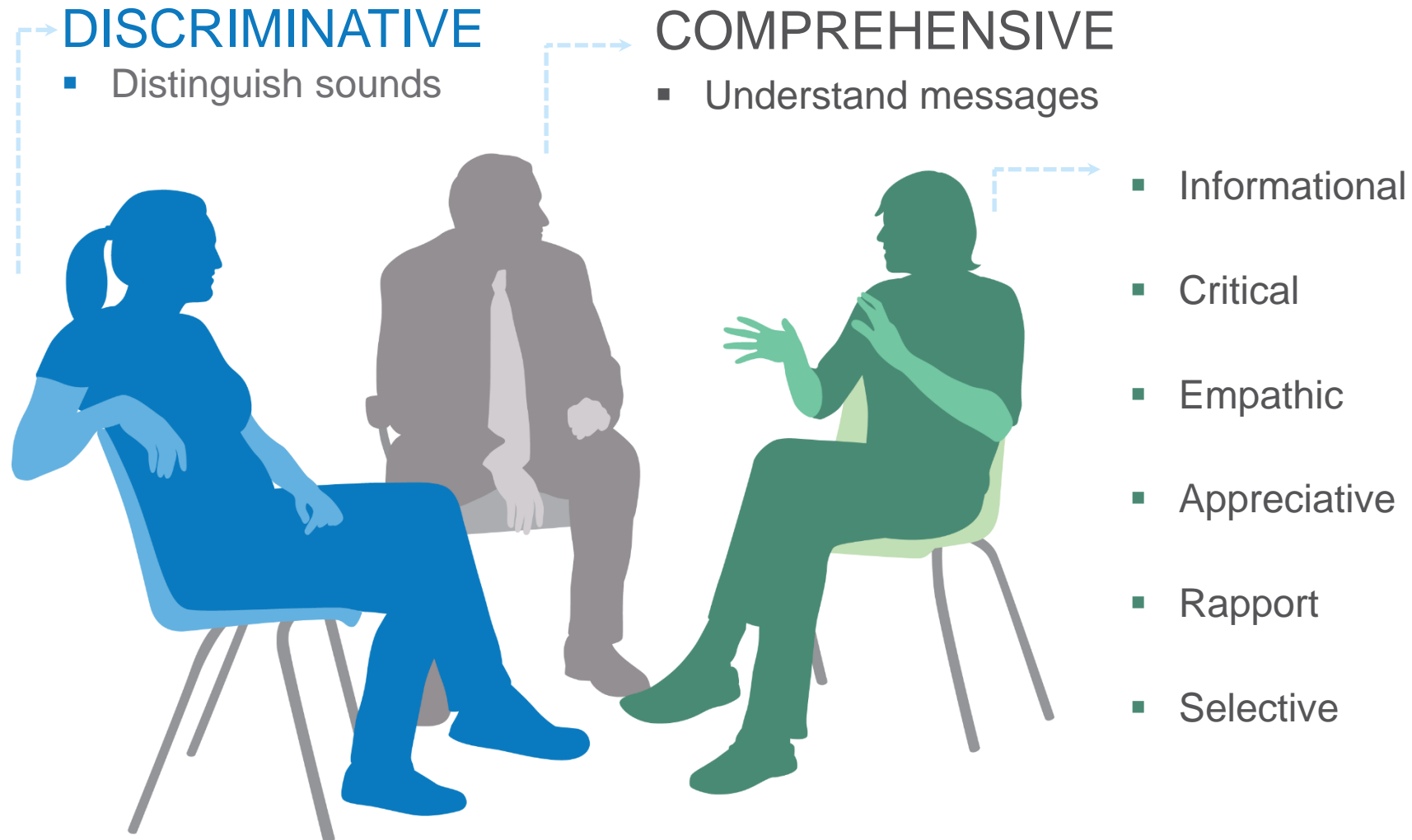
Less than 2%

of all professionals have had formal education or learning to understand and improve listening skills and techniques.

IN A TYPICAL BUSINESS DAY, WE SPEND:



Types of Listening



Test Your Listening IQ





OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LISTENING

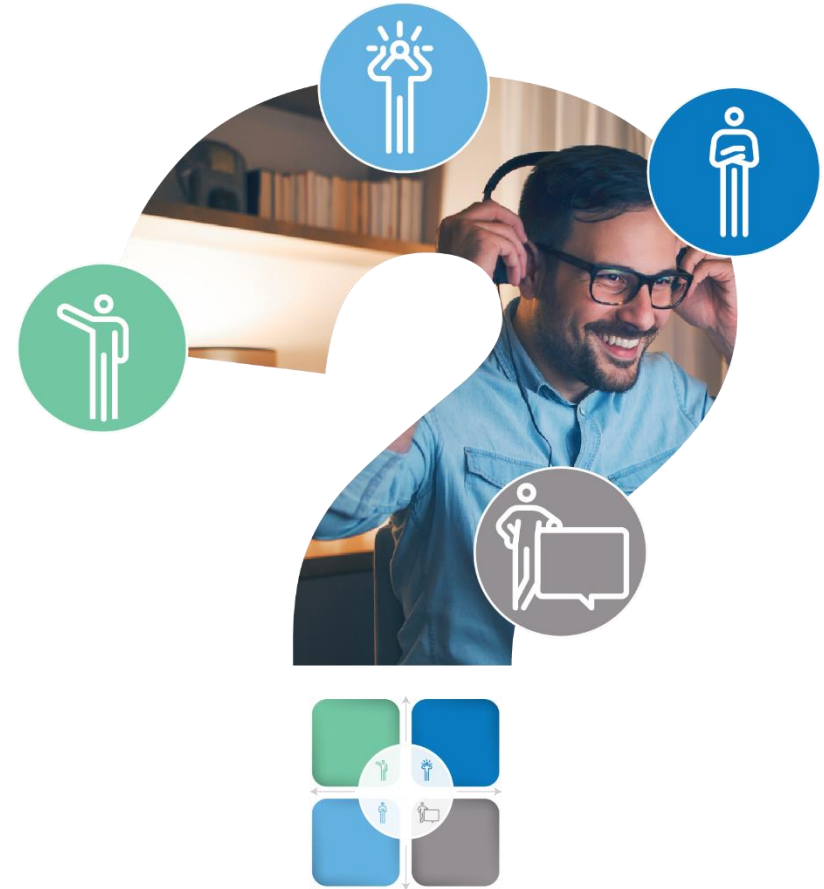
What Makes Listening Difficult?



Poll Question #2

Thinking over the conversations you had in the last week, which reason had the **biggest impact** on your listening ability?

- A. I'd rather talk.
- B. I'm distracted.
- C. It isn't interesting.
- D. I'm busy talking.

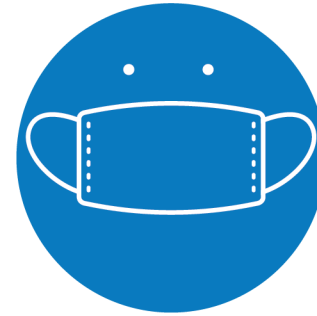


Poll Question #2 Results

Other Difficult Listening Situations



MULTICULTURAL
SITUATIONS



DURING A
PANDEMIC



GENDER
DIFFERENCES

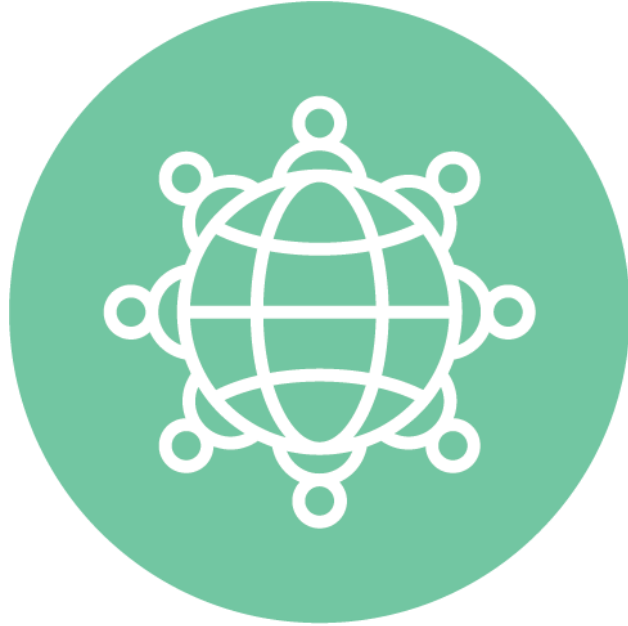


LISTENING ON
THE TELEPHONE



REMOTE
TECHNOLOGY

Listening in Multicultural Situations



- Be present
- Pause before responding
- Be open and curious
- Paraphrase and summarize
- Beware of biases and stereotypes
- Be aware of body language and its meaning
- Validate the speaker
- Look for commonalities

Differences in Listening



Feminine Communication

PURPOSE:

Create and foster relationships

- Equity
- Support
- Conversational “maintenance work”
- Responsive style
- Personal style
- Tentativeness

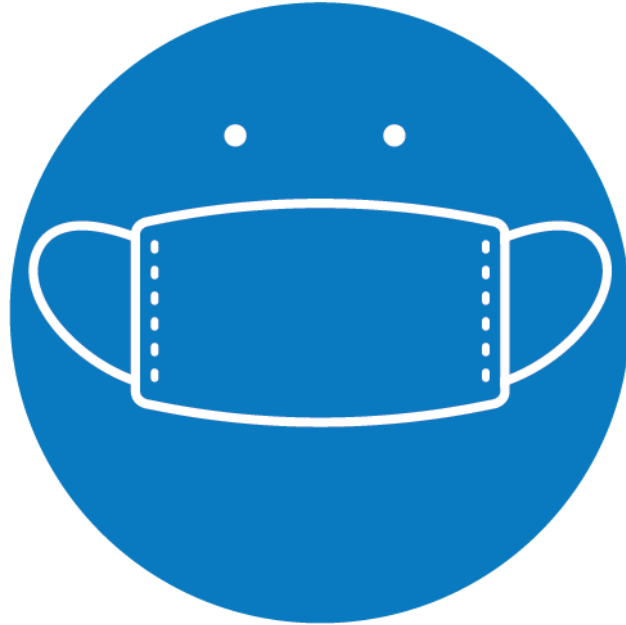
Masculine Communication

PURPOSE:

Establish individuality

- Exhibit knowledge
- Refrain from personal disclosure
- Abstract
- Focused on instrumentality
- Conversational command
- Direct and assertive
- Less responsive

Challenges of Listening in a Pandemic



- Less face-to-face interactions
- Distractions of working from home
- Face coverings hiding body language
- Employees dealing with more emotions
- New technology challenges

Overcoming the Challenges



Always recall the details

Understand the big picture

Evaluate the content

Attend to subtle cues

Empathize

Pay attention to the virtual environment

Reflect and ask questions for clarification

When unable to observe body language,
focus on word choices

On video, use your body language

Try to slow down your pacing

Stop and notice

Overcoming Technological Challenges



- **TURN OFF** your cell phone and minimize other windows on the computer
- **TEST** the technology beforehand
- Do a **SOUND CHECK**
- **REDUCE** visual stimulations
- Have a **BACKUP** alternative

Listening on the Telephone



- Stay focused
- Detect emotions
- Ask questions
- Don't interrupt
- Don't preempt
- Recap key facts
- Take notes
- Say it again
- Watch the stereotypes

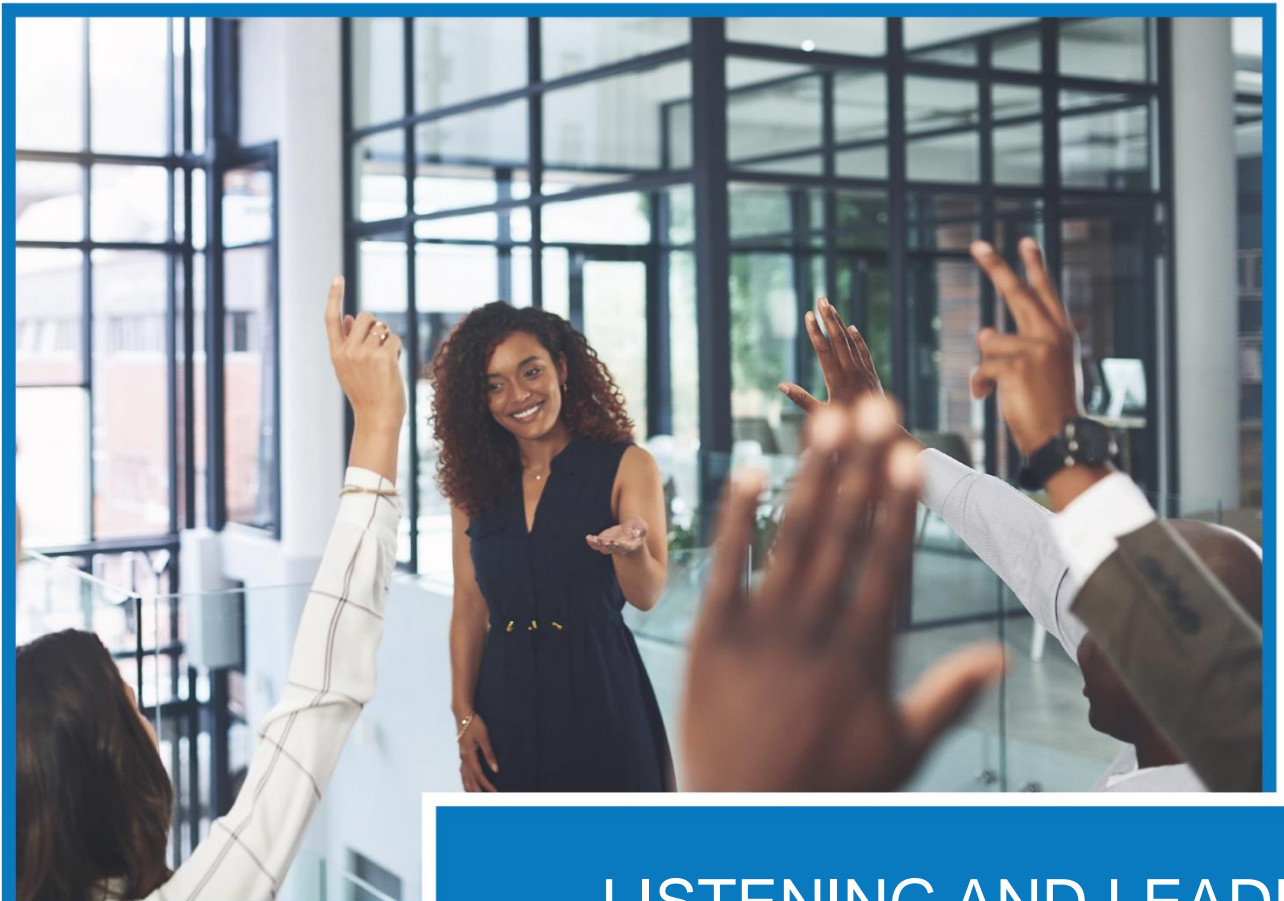
Poll Question #3

Which situation has proved personally **most challenging** for your listening skills?

- A. Multicultural situations
- B. Gender differences
- C. The pandemic
- D. Using remote technology
- E. Listening on the phone



Poll Question #3 Results



LISTENING AND LEADERSHIP

Why Listening Is an Important Leadership Skill

LISTENING is the foundation of healthy workplace relations.

Employee **ENGAGEMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY** will increase.

Your team members have **IMPORTANT** information.

Your team will become **MORE CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE.**

Listening leads to **PERSONAL AWARENESS AND GROWTH.**

LISTENING is a critical component of being a transformational leader.

You'll keep pace with a **CHANGING** workplace.

Listening is crucial for **GOOD DECISION MAKING.**

You'll be able to "**SELL**" your technical skills.



Listening and the IMA Management Accounting Competency Framework



- Communication
- Motivating and Inspiring Others
- Collaboration, Teamwork, and Relationship Management
- Change Management
- Conflict Management
- Negotiation
- Talent Management



Poll Question #4

Which reason for listening as a leader is **most important** to you right now?

- A. Fostering healthy workplace relationships.
- B. Increasing employee engagement and productivity.
- C. Creating a more creative and innovative team.
- D. Making better decisions.
- E. Having more personal awareness and growth.



Poll Question #4 Results

What Great Listeners Do



TRADITIONAL QUALITIES

- Not interrupting
- Using facial expressions and verbal sounds to convey listening
- Repeating what others have said



SURPRISING QUALITIES

- Seeing listening as a two-way dialogue
- Including interactions that build a person's self-esteem
- Seeing listening as a cooperative conversation
- Tending to make suggestions

EAAR Listening Method

E
EXPLORE

*“**Ms. Manager**, what are the reasons that led you to conclude **Mr. Employee** should be fired?”*

“Tell me more.” “Please share some examples.” “Help me understand.”

A
ACKNOWLEDGE

*“So, **Ms. Manager**, if I understand you correctly, you believe **Mr. Employee** should be terminated because of the following reasons... Is that correct?”*

[If no] “I’m sorry. Please explain what I missed.”

A
APPLY

*“**Ms. Manager**, I agree with you that **Mr. Employee’s** behavior is unacceptable. What you described [list the employee’s actions] makes a compelling case. Because of the following reasons, however, I think terminating his employment now would be premature and present undue legal risk.”*

R
RESPOND

*“Nevertheless, I’m happy to work with you on an intervention strategy. If **Mr. Employee** is willing and able to clear the gap in your legitimate management expectations, he’ll do so. If not, we’ll be in a much stronger position to terminate his employment, and I’ll support you.”*

Other Active Listening Tips

- Face the speaker and maintain **eye contact**
- Be attentive, but **relaxed**
- Keep an **open mind**
- Try to picture what the speaker is **saying**
- Don't impose your "**solutions**"
- Wait for a **pause** to ask clarifying questions
- Try to feel what the speaker is **feeling**
- Give the speaker regular **feedback**
- Pay **attention** to what *isn't* said—nonverbal cues
- Don't **multitask**
- Recognize the **contribution** of others
- Be **authentic** in your response
- Be expansively **mindful**



After Listening Checklist

- Did I still the **chatter** in my head?
- Did I try to see things from the other person's **point of view**?
- Did I convey **interest** in what the person was saying?
- Did I ask **good questions** to support the conversation?
- Did I "**listen between the lines**" to notice connotations and implicit meanings?
- Did I **resist** the temptation to jump in with evaluative or disparaging comments?
- Did I **rephrase** what the other person said so as to better understand it?
- When I responded, did I speak **clearly**?
- Was I honest? Did I show **empathy**?
- Did I treat the other person with **respect**?



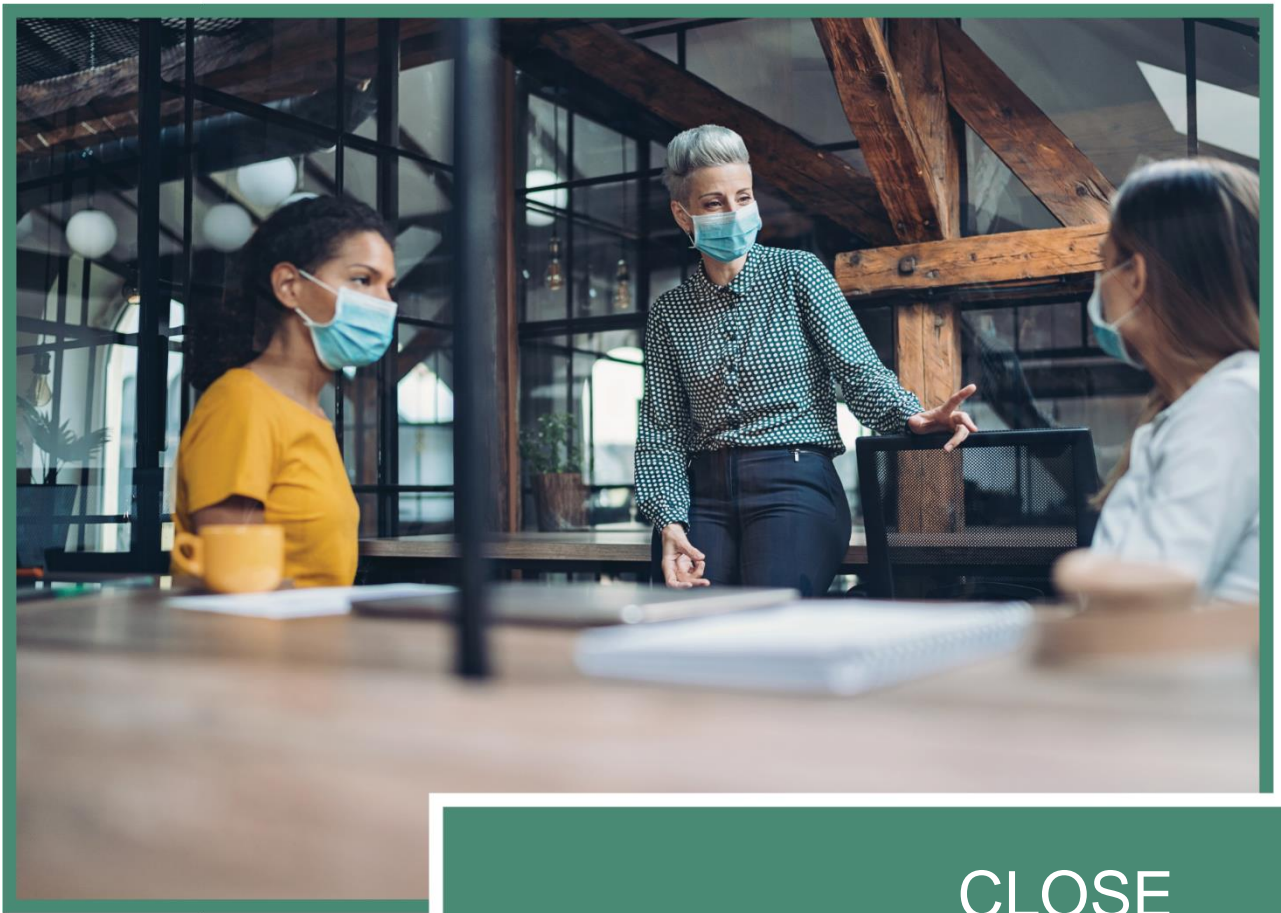
Poll Question #5

Of the listening tips and techniques below, which one do you most want to **work on** yourself?

- A. Using a listening method such as EAAR.
- B. Using checklist after listening to improve.
- C. Not multitasking but giving the speaker my full attention.
- D. Trying to feel what the speaker is feeling.
- E. Paying attention to nonverbal cues.
- F. Responding authentically.
- G. Being expansively minded.



Poll Question #5 Results



CLOSE

Review



BASICS



OVERCOMING
BARRIERS



LEADERSHIP

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Why listening is an important skill for leaders and what strategies good listeners implement to strengthen their teams and organizations.



3-2-1 Action Plan



Questions and Answers



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Thank you!



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