Chapter 9
Listening in Our Lives: I Know You “Hear” Me, But Are You Listening?

This chapter focuses on listening strategies and techniques and how to engage in more effective listening across various contexts. Improving your listening will also be examined for speaker’s evidence and credibility.

“When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen.” Ernest Hemingway
The Listening Process

• **Hearing**: receiving and processing sounds.
  - **Listening**: psychological process where you take in sounds and process them in order to understand.
  - **Auditory discrimination**: the ability to distinguish sounds.
  - **Thought-speech differential**: Difference between what human beings can understand per minute and the rate at which the average person speaks.
  - **Scopic listening**: Listeners who develop an open interest in many topics.

• **Understanding**: Making sense of the message heard.
The Listening Process

- **Remembering:** the act of retaining something in your memory.
  - **Immediate memory:** Attending to something that is later discarded or placed in short- or long-term memory.
  - **Short-term memory:** Memory with a limited capacity that is stored for a brief time unless it is important enough to be moved into long-term memory.
  - **Repetition:** A strategy to help improve your short-term memory by restating to yourself over and over again what you need to remember.
  - **Chunking:** a strategy that helps maintain information in short-term memory by remembering information in sections or pieces.
The Listening Process

• Remembering
  • **Long-term memory:** is our brain’s filing system.
  • **Association:** making a connection between one thing and another.
  • **Categorization:** process of classifying information and is another strategy used to enhance long-term memory.
  • **Mnemonic devices:** are techniques that help you retain information in a more effective way than in its original form.
The Listening Process

• **Interpreting:** Going beyond just the actual words that are being said.

• **Evaluating:** Considering the message and the credibility of the speaker and separating fact from opinion to judge the meaning of the message.

• **Responding:** Selecting the appropriate message to send back to the speaker.
Types of Listening

- **Informational listening**: Involves listening with the goal of understanding or comprehending.
- **Critical listening**: Listening to make a judgement.
- **Empathic listening**: Listening from the other person's perspective to support or help that person.
- **Appreciative listening**: Listening for enjoyment.
Listening in Various Contexts

• Listening in Families
• Listening in Educational Settings
• Listening in Physician-Patient Relationships
• Listening in Organizational Settings
• Listening to Mediated Messages
Barriers to Listening

- Fatigue
- Distractions
- Your physical state
- Environmental constraints
- Your motivation to listen
- Speaker style, tone, topic, monotone voice, etc.
- Worried about something or someone, etc.
- Not interested in what the speaker has to say
Listening Misbehavior

- **Pseudo-listening:** Pretending to listen to others while thinking about something.
- **Selective listening:** Listening to only portions of a message.
- **Stage hogging:** Turning the conversation toward oneself rather than listening fully to the other person.
- **Defensive Listening:** When a listener perceives what is being said as a personal attack.
- **Insensitive Listening:** When a listener pays attention only to a speaker’s words but fail to interpret other nonverbal clues that would enhance understanding of the speaker’s intent.
Improving Your Listening

• Find a Reason to Listen
• Stay Focused
• Listen Fully and Fairly
• Examine the Speaker’s Evidence and Credibility
• Prepare to Listen