

LISTENING SELF-ASSESSMENT

Read each item and then check the box indicating how frequently you actually use this skill when talking with others. *Remember, this is a self-assessment, so be honest!* Review your results and identify which communications areas are your strengths and where you could use some improvement. Include improvement area(s) in your personal development plan; several Active Listening tips are included on the following page.

	Usually Do	Do Sometimes	Should Do More Often
1. I try to make others feel at ease when I am talking with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I try not to think about other things when listening to others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. When I listen, I can separate my own ideas and thoughts from the speaker's.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I can listen to others with whom I disagree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I try not to form a rebuttal in my head while others are talking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I observe others' verbal <u>and</u> nonverbal behaviors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I let others finish speaking before I begin talking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I listen to what others say rather than assume that I know what they are going to say.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I concentrate on others' messages rather than on their physical appearance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. As I listen, I figure out how others are feeling.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I ask others to clarify or repeat information when I am unsure what was meant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I can remember the important details of what others tell me during conversations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I restate information given to me to make sure that I understand it correctly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. If I find I'm losing track of what others are saying, I concentrate harder.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Tips for Active Listening

The following are techniques to help ensure active listening:

- **Make eye contact.** Eye contact increases the chances of “getting” the message and demonstrates interest and attention. When listening to someone on the phone, try not to look at things that will take attention away from the speaker.
- **Adjust your body posture.** Posture—facing the speaker and slightly leaning in— suggests that you are paying attention and helps you to stay tuned in. When on the phone, position yourself so that you’re comfortable but not so relaxed that you lose the ability to attend to the speaker.
- **Give verbal or nonverbal acknowledgment.** Acknowledging the speaker helps involve you in the communication process and shows you are paying attention.
- **Clear your mind.** Clear your mind of your own thoughts to avoid wandering mentally.
- **Avoid distracting behaviors.** Distracting behaviors—playing with a pencil, drumming your fingers, grimacing, jingling change in your pocket, or others—may take away from your ability to listen and distract the speaker.