



M.V.P. SAMAJ'S

**K.S.K.W. ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE COLLEGE
CIDCO, NASHIK-422008**

Project

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SUBMITTED TO

**SAVITRIBAI PHULE PUNE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
ENGLISH**

SKILL COMMUNICATION

BY

Ms. N. L. JAYANTHI

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF

Ms. S.S KENDALE

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Long Term Paper entitled, “**LISTENING SKILLS**” which is being submitted herewith is the result of original research work completed by Ms. N.L. Jayanthi, under my guidance.



Place: Cidco, Nashik

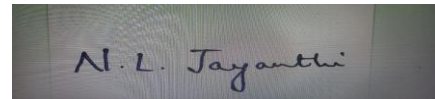
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Paper Guide

Ms. S.S.Kendale

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the short project entitled, “**LISTENING SKILLS**” for the paper, Skill Communication completed and written by me. The references used for this work have been duly acknowledged.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "N. L. Jayanthi".

Ms. Jayanti N. L.

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Introduction of Listening Skills

Listening is a significant part of communication process. Communication cannot take place until and unless a message is heard and retained thoroughly and positively by the receivers/listeners. Listening is a dynamic process. **Listening means attentiveness and interest perceptible in the posture as well as expressions.** Listening implies decoding (i.e., translating the symbols into meaning) and interpreting the messages correctly in the communication process. Knowing how to be an engaged listener is a pivotal skill for effective communication. Learning the combined set of skills and techniques will empower you with the ability to build excellent rapport with others, manage stress at the moment and develop the capacity to recognise and understand your emotions and those you are communicating with.

Advantages of Listening Skills

Listening isn't a skill; it is a discipline! "The quieter we will become the more we will be good at listening". Not everyone intuitively knows how to listen well. Turning into a brilliant listener will take [determination](#) and [practice](#). Being a good listener will be well worth it in our [professional](#) and personal lives too.

The advantages of listening skills are:

1. Builds trust and strong relationships.
2. Help to resolve conflict.
3. Prevents us from missing important information.
4. Helps to build more knowledge.
5. Enables to identify or anticipate problems.
6. Helps in better understanding things.

Obstacles to Effective Listening

Evaluative listening

Evaluative listeners spend all their time evaluating what you are saying, and making judgements about it. You can spot an evaluative listener, because they will always respond with either agreement or disagreement (or possibly both, in the form of ‘yes, but...’). The big problem with these listeners is that they are hearing everything from their own point of view. Everything is passed through a prism of their own experiences and opinions. This means that they often miss critical information simply because it does not fit with their view of the world. The other problem is that speaker and listener can get into a negative spiral of argument and counter-argument. Instead of building on each other’s communication, they are engaged in knocking it down.

Assumptive listening

Assumptive listeners make assumptions about the speaker’s meaning or intention—and usually before the speaker has finished. They may therefore finish other people’s sentences, or jump in with a response before the speaker has really finished. Engaging with an assumptive listener is hard work, because you constantly have to go back and explain your meaning again because they have interpreted it incorrectly.

Self-protective listening

Here, the listener is so wrapped up in their own situation and/or emotional response to it that they simply have no brain-space to hear or concentrate on anything else. In other words, they are not really listening at all, and they are certainly not engaging with what anyone else says. It is a moot point whether this should actually be described as ‘listening’ at all—except that these listeners will often be nodding and smiling, and generally looking like they are engaging with what is being said. However, when they come to respond, it will be obvious that they have not really heard or taken on board anything that is said. These listeners often simply repeat their negative stories over and over again—and with increasing levels of negative emotion.

Judgmental listening

Judgmental listeners will constantly criticize what speakers are saying. This type of listening is similar to evaluative listening, but usually with more negativity and less opportunity to respond. These listeners often have preconceived ideas about the speaker (for example, bias or prejudice based on how they look, or their background). This may prevent them from considering the speaker's ideas with an open mind. This type of listening tends to result in the speaker shutting down, and refusing to provide any more information. Being constantly criticized quickly becomes unpleasant.

Affirmative listening

Affirmative listening is more or less the polar opposite of judgmental listening. Affirmative listeners only 'hear' messages with which they agree. They therefore only listen for points that they can support, and not those that show different opinions. Having an affirmative listener is at first quite pleasant. They tend to agree with you, which is nice. However, after a while, you realize that they only agree with some points—and possibly not very important ones—but refuse to engage with anything else. The problem here is that these people only listen for themselves. They want their opinion to be validated—and have no real interest in anyone else. This quickly gets one-sided and tiresome, especially if you are genuinely interested in a debate that explores different perspectives.

Defensive listening

A defensive listener takes everything that is said as a personal attack. These people therefore feel the need to defend themselves against everything, and to justify everything that they say. They often use the phrase 'Yes, but...', because they have no interest in building on any other communication—only to justify themselves. They also find it hard to explore other points of view, because anything different is a threat.

Authoritative listening

Authoritative listeners listen solely in order to advise. They always know best, and are always ready to tell you what to do. You can often spot authoritative listeners by the use of the words ‘You should...’ or ‘You need...’ in their sentences.

Common obstacles to Listening

- These types of ineffective listening generally relate to patterns of thinking. However, there may also be physical barriers to listening.
- These affect your physical ability to concentrate on a speaker and/or to hear their words or message. They include, but are not limited to:
- Too much noise around you. It can be hard to listen effectively if there is too much background noise. This can happen at a party, or in a crowded room, for example, but may also include having the television on in the background.
- Trying to listen to more than one conversation at a time. There is some overlap here with background noise, because it could include having the television or radio on while attempting to listen to somebody talk, being on the phone to one person and talking to another person in the same room, or simply trying to talk to two people at once.
- You are distracted by something else in your environment. Sadly, our brains are fairly fickle things, and easily distracted. A movement out of the window, or a stray thought, can derail listening. Your smartphone showing you a notification can be a major distraction—which is why it is advisable to put it away if someone wants to speak to you. Many people also find that they can distract themselves, for example, by doodling, or fiddling with something. However, for others, this can be a way of helping them to focus by distracting their hands, but not their brains.
- You find the communicator attractive or unattractive and you pay more attention to how you feel about them and their physical appearance than to what they are saying. This can also apply when someone has an accent: you may find yourself listening to the cadence, and not the words or meaning.

- You are not interested in the topic/issue being discussed and become bored. This rapidly leads to you becoming distracted and ceasing to pay attention.
- Feeling unwell or tired, hungry, thirsty or needing to use the toilet, too hot or too cold. Physical discomfort is a huge distraction. It is almost impossible to concentrate effectively when you feel uncomfortable in some way.
- Being stressed about something else that is happening in your life. When you have a lot going on in your life, it is much harder to calm your internal dialogue and simply listen to someone else.
- Being on the phone rather than speaking face-to-face. A considerable amount of communication is in body language and facial expression. You therefore have to concentrate much harder on the phone, to fully ‘hear’ the speaker’s message. When you are speaking on the phone, it may be helpful to emphasize your tone of voice more, to ensure that your message is clearly heard.
- If you don’t really understand what someone is saying, perhaps because of their choice of words, or because they have a strong accent. Under these circumstances, it is tempting to just ‘switch off’. However, instead, you should try to listen harder, and ask for clarification if you don’t understand.

Purpose of Listening Skills

Listening skills serves a number of possible purposes, and the purposes of listening will depend on the situation and nature of communication.

1. To specifically focus on the messages being communicated, avoiding distractions and preconceptions.
2. To gain a full and accurate understanding into the speakers point of view and ideas.
3. To critically assess what is being said.
4. To observe the non-verbal signals accompanying what is being said to enhance understanding.
5. To show interest, concern and concentration.
6. To encourage the speaker to communicate fully, openly and honestly.
7. To develop a selflessness approach, putting the speaker first.

8. To arrive at a shared and agreed understanding and acceptance of both sides views.

Often our main concern while listening is to formulate ways to respond. This is not a function of listening. We should try to focus fully on what is being said and how it's being said in order to more fully understand the speaker.

Tips for Effective Listening

1. Discover your interests' field.
2. Grasp and understand the matter/content.
3. Remain calm. Do not lose your temper. Anger hampers and inhibits communication. Angry people jam their minds to the words of others.
4. Be open to accept new ideas and information.
5. Jot down and take a note of important points.
6. Work upon listening. Analyze and evaluate the speech in spare time.
7. Rephrase and summarize the speaker's ideas.
8. Keep on asking questions. This demonstrates how well you understand the speaker's ideas and also that you are listening.
9. Avoid distractions.
10. "Step into the shoes of others", i.e., put yourself in the position of the speaker and observe things from his view point. This will help create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and improve the exchange of ideas in the communication process.

Conclusion

When you listen to others patiently and attentively, they feel important and automatically reciprocate in the same fashion when you start speaking; so you are always at an advantage. On one hand, you learn from the other individual's ideas and experiences and on the other hand build your own audience!

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