

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LISTENING

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Annotation: Listening is the most important component of effective communication and it can be categorized into different types based on the level of engagement and involvement: active and passive listening. This article delves to present an in-depth exploration of each type, highlighting their distinct characteristics, benefits, and limitations. By comprehending the nuances between active and passive listening, individuals can significantly improve their communication abilities, leading to more profound connections and better understanding. Active listening contain active engagement, empathetic response, and deliberate effort to comprehend the speaker's message. On the other hand, passive listening refers to the act of merely hearing without actively engaging or responding to them.

Keywords: active listening, passive listening, barriers to active listening.

Passive and active listening are often distinguishable by the specific actions involved in each type of listening. Effective listeners can use passive listening in some situations but are more likely to use active listening in many scenarios where comprehension, recall and engagement are important. In this article, we discuss the differences between passive and active listening, discuss the benefits of active listening, and how to more effectively use active listening. The main difference between active and passive listening is that active listening is more effective than passive listening because individuals practicing active listening can comprehend the speaker's words more easily and also show the speaker that they are paying attention. Here is an explanation of each type of listening:

Active listening:

Active listening is being fully engaged while another person is talking to you. It is listening with the intent to understand the other person fully, rather than listening to respond. This form of listening conveys a mutual understanding between speaker and listener. Speakers receive confirmation their point is coming across and listeners absorb more content and understanding by being consciously engaged. The overall goal of active listening is to eliminate any misunderstandings and establish clear communication of thoughts and ideas between the speaker and listener. By actively listening to another person, a sense of belonging and mutual understanding between the two individuals is created. The term "active listening" was introduced in 1957 by Carl Rogers and Richard Farson. It may also be referred to as reflective listening. Active listening is characterized by focused attention, engagement, and empathetic response. It involves actively participating in the communication process, demonstrating understanding, and providing feedback to the speaker.

Passive listening:

Passive listening is when someone hears but does not fully process or respond to shared information. This can be due to several factors, such as distractions, lack of interest, confusion, or boredom, among others. Passive listeners are often disengaged from the conversation, and they may not remember what was said. This type of listener might not even realize that they aren't actively engaged in the conversation. The main purpose of passive listening is to help individuals become familiar with a new language in the most relaxed way as possible. A common question that many learners ask is whether or not they should practice passive listening. The answer is that you should engage in passive listening every day. However, do not consider passive listening as the primary method to improve your listening skills. Instead, view it as a supportive tool.

Barriers to active listening

There are many barriers that can prevent you from listening actively, such as distractions, biases, emotions, or assumptions. Here are some tips to help you:

1. **Avoid distractions.** One of the main barriers to active listening is external or internal distractions. External distractions are anything that can interfere with your sensory input, such as noise, visual clutter, or interruptions. Internal distractions are anything that can divert your mental focus, such as boredom, fatigue, or preoccupation. To avoid distractions, you need to create a conducive environment for listening, such as turning off your phone, finding a quiet place, or minimizing other sources of stimulation. You also need to be mindful of your own thoughts and feelings, and try to clear your mind of irrelevant or negative thoughts that can distract you from the speaker.
2. **Be open-minded.** Another barrier to active listening is your own biases, opinions, or judgments. These can make you resistant, defensive, or dismissive of what the speaker is saying, especially if you disagree with them or have different values or perspectives. To be open-minded, you need to suspend your own agenda and assumptions, and try to understand the speaker's point of view and intentions. You also need to respect their opinions and feelings, even if you don't share them, and avoid interrupting, arguing, or criticizing them.
3. **Manage your emotions.** A third barrier to active listening is your own emotions or the emotions of the speaker. Emotions can affect how you perceive and interpret what the speaker is saying, and how you respond to them. They can also trigger emotional reactions, such as anger, frustration, or anxiety, that can hinder your listening. To manage your emotions, you need to be aware of them and how they influence your listening. You also need to regulate them and avoid letting them overwhelm you or interfere with your communication. You can do this by breathing deeply, relaxing your body, or taking a break if needed.
4. **Ask questions.** A fourth barrier to active listening is a lack of clarity or understanding of what the speaker is saying. This can happen if the speaker is unclear, vague, or uses unfamiliar terms or concepts. It can also happen if you are confused, uncertain, or have gaps in your knowledge. To ask questions, you need to be curious and attentive to what the speaker is saying, and seek clarification or elaboration if you don't understand something. You also need to ask open-ended questions that encourage the speaker to explain more, rather than closed-ended questions that limit their response.
5. **Provide feedback.** A fifth barrier to active listening is a lack of feedback or acknowledgement of what the speaker is saying. This can make the speaker feel ignored, misunderstood, or unappreciated. It can also make you miss important information or cues that

the speaker is giving. To provide feedback, you need to show interest and engagement in what the speaker is saying, and confirm your understanding and empathy. You also need to use verbal and non-verbal signals, such as nodding, smiling, or paraphrasing, that indicate that you are listening and following the conversation.

Techniques for active listening

Active listening has several significant techniques such as **maintain eye contact** (looking at the speaker shows you are focused and engaged), **listen attentively** (avoid interrupting and let the speaker finish their opinion), **paraphrase** (retelling the key points to confirm your understanding), **ask clarifying questions** (search to understand the speaker's perspective and intent).

• Maintain eye contact

Maintain eye contact Maintaining eye contact is assential for effective communication. It shows confidence, interest, and engagement. Here are a few tips for making eye contact:

1. Practice: Start with a friend or in front of a mirror to get comfortable.
2. 3.Second Rulo: Hold eye contact for about throo seconde before briefly looking away.
3. Look at Both Eyes: Shift your gaze between the person's left and right eye to create a sense of connection.
4. Use Body Language: Pair eye contact with open body language (e.g., facing someone, smiling) to enhance engagement.
5. Be Mindful: Don't stare. Avoiding too much eye contact can also make others uncomfortable.
6. Cultural Sensitivity: Be aware that eye contact norma can vary by culture.

• About "Asking open-ended questions"

Open-ended questions are questions that require more than a simple "yes" or "no" response. They are designed to encourage respondents to provide detailed answers in their own words. Open-ended questions generally require longer, fuller and more meaningful answers that originate from knowledge, thoughts, feelings, and experiences. They have no 'right' or 'wrong' or predictable answers. Words like 'think, would', 'could or 'might' are often found in open questions.

Conclusion: Active listening is more effective and interactive way to communicate than passive listening. Active listening can help you understand the speaker's message, show that you are paying attention, and demonstrate respect In addition, active listening can help you improve your communication abilities, build trust, and make better decisions. Both types have their distinct advantages and limitations. Developing active listening skills is crucial for individuals to enhance their communication abilities, establish meaningful connections, and foster mutual understanding.

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