

# How to Listen

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Listening is a skill, a strategy and a practice – a way to balance how you communicate.

Most people think that more talking, faster communication and more energy are the ways to get most out of back to back meetings.

World class listeners exhibit curiosity, flexibility and openness.

Listening is the willingness to have your mind changed

The more senior you are in an organization,  
the more listening matters.

Three numbers about human beings

*Talking speed 125 words per minute*

*Listening speed 400 words per minute*

*Thinking speed 900 words per minute*

Paradoxically, Meetings and conversations will be shorter if you improve your listening skills.



Listening needs pausing, your presence, and regulating your ego.

The deeper you breathe, the deeper you listen

Listen with your whole body, not just the ears,  
listen by seeing with the eyes, the verbal, non-  
verbal, the surroundings

We default our minds to listen to similarities as opposed to differences.

Paraphrasing is the process of reflecting to the speaker what was said and heard. It is an opportunity to increase shared comprehension.

Paraphrasing is reflection, not interpretation.

Taking notes is one of the most consequential types of listening.

The danger is your ability to write down (speed) is lower than the speaker's word speed and hence you need to ensure you hear while you write.

The room you are in will influence listening

Choose a room to match the energy of the meeting

Words are the ingredients and sentences their recipe.



Adjectives are signposts for teams and systems.  
example..

The complex project

The costly project

The frustrating project

The political project

The unnecessary project

The costly project

Watch for these pronouns when someone speaks:

Self orientation is : Me, I, Mine

Other orientation is : They, Them, Team

System orientation is : Us , organization,  
Community

If someone is not listening in a meeting he is more likely to interrupt you during the presentation.

Meaning emerges in the silence between the words.

How long have you been thinking about this?

When did you first notice this?

Are two questions to ask if the speaker hasn't verbalized well.

The curiosity to pause and ensure shared understanding will surface what is unspoken.

SILENT and LISTEN share the same letters.

Your role as a listener is not to understand what they say, but to help them make sense of what they mean.



When you listen for meaning, opposing ideas and views can coexist and cooperate.