Listening Skills

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**Interviewer Communication Time**

Eighty percent of your interview is spent on some form of communication. Of that time…

9% is spent writing

16% is spent reading

30% is spent speaking

45% is spent listening

However, most of us are poor listeners

Here are several reasons:

1. No listening training (writing and speaking training is available)
2. Thought speed is greater than speaking speed.

Speak- 125 words per minute

Understand- 400 words per minute

If we only use 25% of our mental capacity (125 words) we have 75% to do something else with. Our minds wander.

1. We are insufficient listeners.

10 minute speech- 50% understood

After 48 hours- 25% understood

Retain only ¼ of what we hear

1. Listening skills suffer with age.

Testing 1st graders- 90% listening/retention

Junior High- 44% listening/retention

High School- 28% listening/retention

1. Listening is hard work.

Being forced to listen for extended period of time is both mentally and physically tiring.

**Ten Worst Listening Habits**

* + - 1. Call the subject matter uninteresting. “Gee how dull can it get: vs. I’m here, I might as well pay attention.
      2. Criticize the delivery or appearance of the speaker. If not dressed right – we tend not to listen closely. Remember the message is more important than the form of delivery.
      3. Become too stimulated – We may disagree and become so involved with counter ideas we no longer listen. We become busy formulating questions.
      4. Listen only for facts (This is a problem common for investigators.)
      5. Try to outline everything that is being said. Outline only the main points and be flexible in your note taking. Note taking must fit the speaker.
      6. Fake attention—Develop faking skills – hands under chin.
      7. Tolerate or create distractions. Ways to improve a listening atmosphere include closing a door, turning a radio off, and quieting other people.
      8. Evade the Difficult. We tend to listen to things that are easy to comprehend and avoid the more difficult.
      9. Submit to emotional words – Don’t let emotional words get in the way of hearing. “Democrat/Republican, Northern/Southern.”
      10. Waste thought power—Use your entire mental focus to listen.