

Thill and Bovee have presented the principles of effective listening in the form of *ten keys to effective listening* as reproduced below:

Ten Keys to Effective Listening

S. No.	To Listen Effectively	The Bad Listener	The Good Listener
1.	Finds areas of interest	Tunes out dry subjects	Opportunises; asks " <i>What's in it for me?</i> "
2.	Judges content, not delivery	Tunes out if delivery is poor	Judges content; skips over delivery errors
3.	Holds the fire	Tends to enter into argument	Does not judge until comprehension is complete; interrupts only to clarify
4.	Listens for ideas	Listens for facts	Listens for central themes
5.	Flexible	Takes intensive notes using only one system	Takes fewer notes; uses four to five different systems, depending on speaker
6.	Works at listening	Shows no energy output; fakes attention	Works hard; exhibits active body state
7.	Resists distractions	Is distracted easily	Fights or avoids distractions; tolerates bad habits; knows how to concentrate
8.	Exercises the mind	Resists difficult material; seeks light, recreational material	Uses heavier material as exercise for the mind
9.	Keeps mind open	Reacts to emotional words	Interprets emotional words; does not get hung up on them
10.	Capitalizes on the fact that thought is faster than speech	Tends to daydream with slow speakers	Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes, weighs the evidence; listens between the lines to tone of voice

Results of Listening

Six benefits will occur if you listen purposefully and positively because such attentive listening:

- (1) Leads to helpful, positive attitudes—by understanding the hindrances that lie in the way of good listening.
- (2) Permits the speaker and listeners to improve communication because each side is more aware of and receptive to the other's viewpoint.
- (3) Indicates by feedback to the speaker that listeners are interested, in turn, the speaker tries harder to give his or her best performance.
- (4) Helps listeners obtain useful information on which they can make accurate decisions.
- (5) Creates better understanding of others and thus helps listeners work with others.
- (6) Helps the speaker (especially in an interview) in talking out a problem a person needs to receive, as well as give, help.

Barriers to Listening

There are many possible barriers to listening:

- (1) Your actual physical ability to hear.
- (2) Attention to the speaker's voice, appearance pronunciation, accent, use of grammar – to the exclusion of what the speaker is trying to say to you.
- (3) Discounting and disregarding what the speaker is saying because you do not like his/her physical appearance, voice, pronunciation, accent, etc.

- (4) Listening to words only, not to the underlying feeling behind the words, much of which is communicated by non-verbal methods.
- (5) Allowing emotional feelings about the subject to "turn you off" especially if the speaker uses emotional words.
- (6) Concentrating on note taking to the extent that you lose the train of thoughts.
- (7) Being sure that you already know all there is to know about the subject.
- (8) Inattentive because you do not like to consider unpleasant, complicated or difficult subjects.
- (9) Inattentive because you are tired, sleepy, hungry or want to go home.
- (10) Inattentive because you know that whatever "is said you could say it better."
- (11) Inattentive because you have more important things to think about.
- (12) Boredom because you have already heard too many speeches, lectures, discussions, conversations, and people "talking to you".
- (13) Inability to keep your mind on the subject.
- (14) Inattention to the speaker's words because you are trying to think of a reply.
- (15) Confusion because you don't have the faintest idea of what the speaker is talking about and have never heard the words before.
- (16) If the physical condition such as lecture theatre or tutorial room, etc. are unsatisfactory, they can affect your level of physical attention.
- (17) Your own attitude, positive as well as negative, play an important part in determining how actively you will listen.

■ Conclusion

Listening is a decoding skill. To listen well, you must receive a message and take it apart to get some meaning from it. In order to make listening effective, concentrate on what you are hearing by trying to anticipate what is going to be said. Listen for major points. Take brief notes if they will be helpful. Ask questions. Consciously block out anything that interferes with your understanding of what is being said.