

Listening for Better Understanding

Have you ever caught yourself thinking “I have no idea what this person just said”? Have you ever been accused of not listening? Have you had to do re-work because you didn’t clearly understand what you were directed to do? Have you had someone get upset with you when they wanted to “vent” and you began helping them solve their problem? If you said “yes” to any of these questions, then this is a program you must attend.

Tom Peters says “The highest compliment you can pay a customer is to listen.” Now that everyone is a customer, both internally and externally, how can you improve in this critical, but often ignored, skill? We all know that listening is important. So why don’t we listen better?

This workshop will help you create a better understanding and practice of effective listening skills. When listening skills are enhanced, there is clearer understanding among colleagues and customers, less re-work, and less time spent fixing misunderstandings.

Key Benefits of Attending:

You’ll analyze your preferred listening preference(s).

You’ll understand how you like to listen, and when that listening mode is most appropriate.

You’ll understand the five primary listening modes, and when each is most effective.

You’ll also understand how to switch modes, depending upon the situation.

You’ll understand what creates listening breakdowns.

And you’ll know how to reduce those breakdowns, and how to fix it when you’ve had a listening breakdown.

You’ll learn how to listen well.

We’ll have various exercises to help you practice these skills.

A Proven Agenda (full-day, or delivered in 2 half-days)

Pre-work: take *Personal Listening Profile* (assessment)

Listening overview

Why is listening well important?

What are the benefits to listening well?

When have you listened well? Under what circumstances?

What creates listening breakdowns?

Audio tape exercise in a difficult listening environment



Personal Listening Profile™

Understanding your listening preferences (understand the results of the Listening Profile)

This Profile has each participant assess and understand his/her natural listening approach.

Morgan Seminar Group

1440 Newport Ave. ▲ San José, CA 95125-3329 ▲ 408/998-7977 ▲ Fax: 408/998-1742
Rebecca@RebeccaMorgan.com ▲ www.RebeccaMorgan.com



After each participant has taken and scored the assessment, the group will discuss each of the five approaches (Appreciative, Empathic, Comprehensive, Discerning, Evaluative), and understand what situations in their lives call for which listening approach.

An audio taped exercise helps participants assess which listening approach is called for in each exercise.

Listening quiz

What makes up good listening behaviors?

- Paraphrasing
- Body language
- Seeking clarification
- Focusing
- Not assuming
- Listening even when the conversation is emotionally charged
- Taking notes
- Responding appropriately

Listening beyond the words

- Listening to the tone of voice
- Probing for more information

Steps to listening well

- How to listen better
- Pairs exercise to practice listening behaviors

Course Objectives:

Participants will:

- Discover their preferred listening approach.
- Appreciate the value of different listening approaches for different situations.
- Understand when different approaches are most effective.
- Develop effective listening strategies.
- Know how to listen better.
- Create a personal development plan to improve listening.

Needed Materials:

- *Listening For Better Understanding* workbook
- *Personal Listening Profile*, \$17.50

Additional Reinforcement Materials:

- *The Business of Listening* book, \$13.95

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