



Listening in the Workplace

When working with non-native speakers, **repeat sentences back to the speaker**, clarifying your understanding, one sentence at a time.

- **Remove cultural barriers.**
 - Mentally acknowledge nonverbal distraction before you begin a conversation.
 - By making yourself aware of the distraction and acknowledging it, you reduce the interference it may cause.
- **Overcome Gender-Related Listening Differences.**
 - Be sensitive to the differences in communication.
 - Don't assume that conversational cues like "Hmmm" or "Uh-huh" signal agreement.
- **Deal with Communication History Barriers**
 - Beginning any conversation by setting parameters.
 - For example, "Jessica, I'm sorry I can't talk. Kyle needs these figures for a meeting in 15 minutes."
- **Don't avoid someone who has information you need because of your past communication history.**
 - For example, "I know we normally talk about your job when we meet, but today, I would like to focus on our project. If you need to talk about your job, we could schedule lunch later in the week."

Beebe, S. A., & Mottet, T. P. (2010). Business and professional communication: Principles and skills for leadership (pp.38).

Goodall, H.L. Jr. and Sandra Goodall: Communicating in Professional Contexts: Skills, Ethics, and Technologies.
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- **Practice the important skill of Critical Listening**
 - The ability of a listener to deliberate on what is said by exploring the logic, reason, and point of view of the speaker.
 - Before we can reflect on the impact a message has on us personally, we must evaluate the qualities of the message.
- **Reflect on the message.**
 - Self-reflexive listening involves listening for how what is said applies to a listener's life.
 - By reflecting on what is said and how it will affect us, we move closer to conscious listening.
- **Listen consciously.**
 - Openly listen to the speaker's point of view that emerges out of dialogue.
 - Conscious listening occurs when all of the communication partners involved in a communication episode or event listen for, and reflect on, how talk affects the whole group, team, or company.
- **Tips for Listening Consciously:**
 - Stop talking. You cannot listen at any level if you are talking.
 - Stop reacting. You cannot listen consciously if you are focusing on what you are going to say next.

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