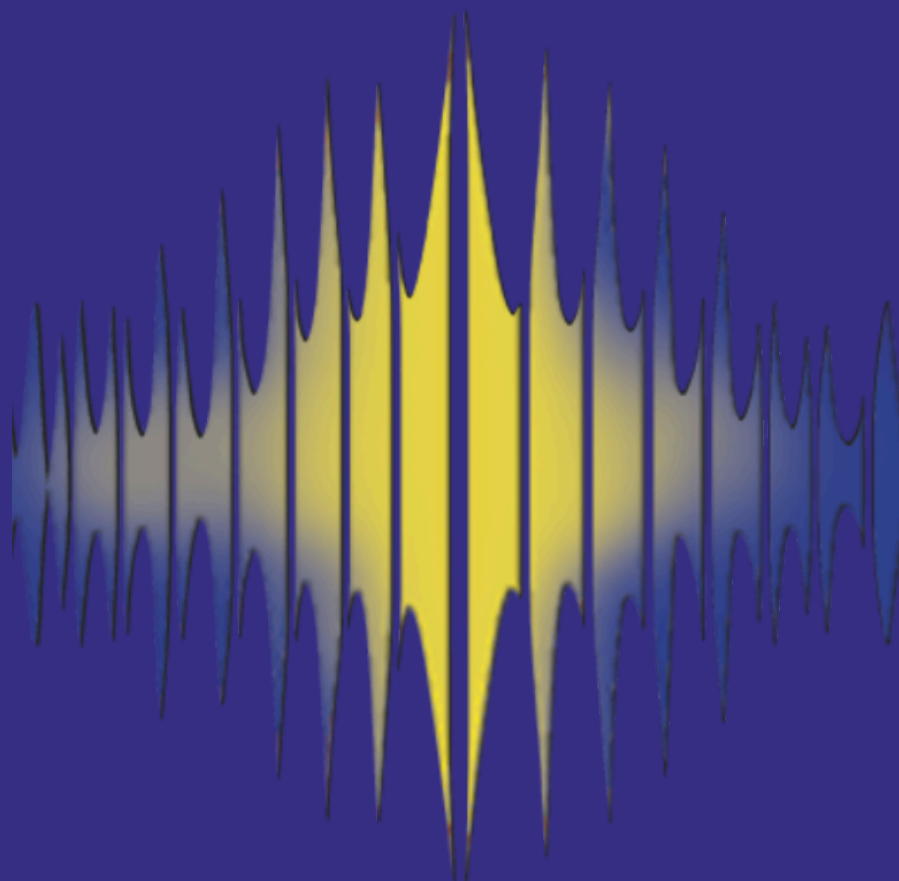


The Art of Listening

Workbook



A guided workbook to become a better version of yourself, by applying active listening to your daily life. Become a great leader, who listens, hears, sees and understand others with authenticity.

Welcome!

This workbook will help you to understand the theory of active listening. You will see that listening is so much more than just hearing. The workbook is intended to help you develop your listening skills and to make listening your second nature. Once you see the benefit of active listening, you will embrace it and it will become part of you.

People will be grateful, and you, you will flourish.

Susan

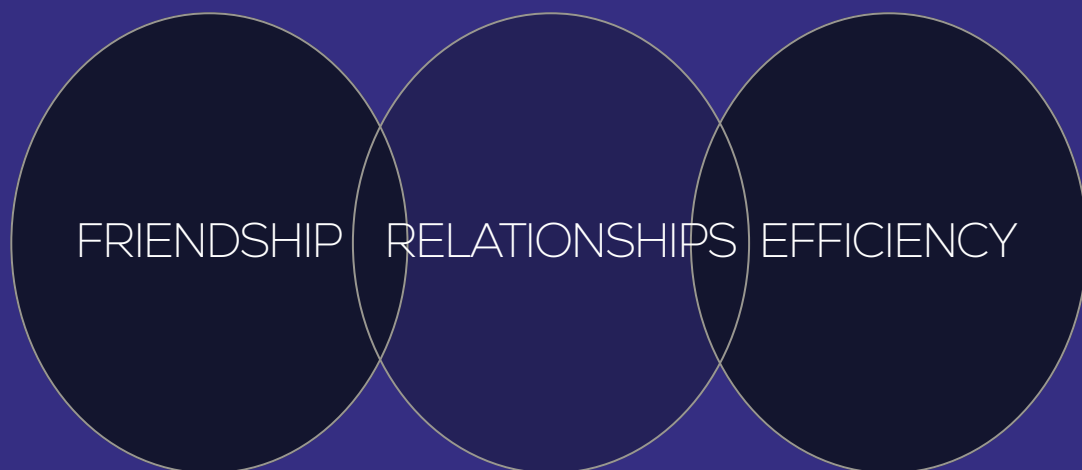
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The Basics

Why Listening Matters

The average person spends most of his time that he is awake, to communication, and the majority of it to listening. Many of the important aspects of your life are influenced by your listening skills (or your lack thereof). The quality of your friendships, how close your family bond is and your efficiency at work. Research says that 75% of what is said, is either forgotten, misunderstood or ignored. People can't listen very well, as we have difficulty remembering what someone said in detail. This has to do with how we are raised ('we don't listen to things like that in our family', 'don't pay attention to him', 'He did not mean it this way'.)



The definition of listening

The difference between hearing and listening is clear. **Hearing** is the process, function or power of perceiving sound, the special sense by which noises or tones are received as stimuli.

Listening is the act of paying attention to sounds. It includes listening to the sounds of nature, listening to music, and perhaps most importantly, interpersonal listening, i.e. listening to other human beings. When listening to another person, one hears what they are saying and tries to understand what it means.

Own reflection

What is your definition of listening?

How do you currently listen to others?

How do others think you listen to them?

Listening skills

IN CLUSTERS

Three different clusters will help you to focus on the skills better, clustering them will make it easier to understand and to apply the skills in different situations.

Attention skills

- Involved body language
- Body movements that fit the story
- Eye contact
- Environment that doesn't distract

Following skills

- Door openers
- Minimal encouragement
- Don't ask too many questions
- Being intentionally quiet

Mirroring skills

- Paraphrase
- Reflect on content
- Reflect on emotions
- Reflect on intention
- Mirror and summarize

Listening requires
attention, curiosity,
patience and
intention.



Make time to really listen and practice the above mentioned skills. They can be applied to any conversation or meeting you are in. During our coaching sessions, we will talk about the individual skills and in which situation you have applied them, and what impact they made.

Attention skills

LISTENING WITH THE FULL BODY

It can make a huge difference how you use your body language. With your body language you can show, without using words, that you pay attention. It invites, shows commitment and makes a conversation possible. (It can break one, too)

TIPS

- Be relaxed
- Open posture
- Sit in front of the other with the appropriate distance
- Eye contact and follow body movements
- Pay attention only to who's speaking, don't be distracted



NOTE

This can be a challenge being in virtual meetings. It's key to apply these skills in virtual meetings, too. You can be easily distracted by your email, other incoming chats or calls. Close any other window when you are in a meeting and just focus on that.

Following skills

1. Door openers: a **non forced** invitation to talk like:

- You don't look to happy today
- Do you want to talk? I'd love to hear more
- Or just stay silent, give the other the time to decide

2. Minimal encouragements: yes, go on, move on, Oh? Oh really?

3. Don't ask to many questions. The story has to stay theirs, not yours

4. Intentional silence. While you are quiet, do the following: pay attention to the other. Observe the other and think about what the other has said

As a listener, you are efficient when you know when to speak and when to stay silent. He knows the appropriate answer to give and feels comfortable doing so A good listener will give the right verbal reactions while at the same time he recognizes the great impact of being quiet.



Mirroring

the most powerful skill. This is about listening to what is not said, listening behind the words and understanding the person's feelings, even when unsaid.

Mirroring

The listener will mirror the feeling or content of what the person said, in a way that he shows he understands and accepts. The essence of mirroring is:

- non-judgmental
- accurate
- short
- mirror more than just the words

Paraphrase

A short reply where you as a listener rephrases in your own words what's just been said. You rephrase the essence of what you heard, based on the content, and facts.

Reflect on content, emotion and intention

Reflect on content: repeat in your own words what you have heard, what the person said.

Reflect on emotion: Tell the person what you see happening with the emotions. Is the person happy, excited, angry, frustrated, or maybe scared?

Reflect on intention: Tell the person what you hear behind the words, what deeper intention has this person with telling you this?



Summarize

A summary can be super helpful when your conversation partner has a long story they shared, including different storylines, multiple feelings, emotions and intentions.

A good summary is powerful, to bring back the person to the core what he wanted to say. To be able to summarize, you need to have full attention. Making notes with keywords can help, and writing down the person's emotions as well. When you summarize, you collect themes based on what the other said, and collect relevant data that you summarize at the end, or at some point in the conversation.

You can start a summary by saying:

- What I hear you say:
- If I understand it correctly,
- You repeated a couple of words:

This requires practice, but when you have the ability, you won't be able to live without it.

Thank you



Thank you for reading my workbook. I hope it will give you inspiration to be a better listener, with attention and intention.

I hope the book will bring you what you were looking for and I wish you the best, efficient and meaningful conversations and meetings.

And remember:

Listen to understand, not to reply.

Source: *Bolton, R. (1979) People Skills: How to assert yourself, listen to others and resolve conflicts. Simon & Schuster, Inc.*

Contact



Want to know more about my services? I offer training, coaching and workshops, for individuals as well as groups.

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