

The background features several sets of curved lines in the top-left and bottom-right corners. Some lines are solid and light gray, while others are dashed and light gray. The main content area is white.

Active Listening
Makes Better
Communication

Welcome to the Huddle

As we wait for the huddle to begin, be thinking about a project your working on and some of the things that make it difficult.

A decorative background featuring several curved lines in shades of gray, some solid and some dashed, sweeping across the top and bottom of the page. A prominent blue speech bubble shape is positioned on the left side, containing the text 'Are you a good listener?'.

Are you a good
listener?

- Are you a good listener?
- Are you a good communicator?
- Can you be one without the other?

What we've
been taught.

- How do we show someone we are listening?
- Things we've been taught:
 - Stay silent
 - Maintain Eye Contact
 - Nod our heads to convey attention



Is it enough?

- True.... It's good practice.
- But it isn't enough....

- Why?



Building Relationships

- Active Listening benefits your Professional and Personal relationships
- People feel heard and not dismissed or unimportant



Practice Makes
Perfect

- Like with any skill or sport – practice is key.
- Active listening requires:
 - Patience
 - True interest
 - Focus
 - Discipline
 - Not just receiving sound...



Listen first

- When we have conversations, we only retain about 25 to 50% of what was said.
- Why?
- We are also working to formulate our answer/response.



Listening Environment

- So what does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Put away distractions
 - No cell phones
 - Put laptops away
 - Your work.... Can wait.
 - Focus your mind only on the conversation.

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It's more than
sound waves...

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Be active and open. Create a non-competitive environment
 - Listening is not passive absorption of sound but rather, understanding.



What's your
style?

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Identify your listening styles:
 - Task Oriented
 - Efficient
 - Compassionate
 - Problem Solver
 - Multitasker

Why am I listening?

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Why are you listening in the first place?
 - Family/Friend needing help
 - Coworker needing your advice
 - Presentation on a topic you really aren't interested in?

The agenda...

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - If you know your style, and why your listening, you can create your listening agenda.
 - Listening agenda means intentionality. How will I understand this conversation and process it appropriately.

Don't make it
about you

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - It's not all about you....
 - The pitfall of stories and relating to someone.
 - We try to build and prove we are listening by sharing stories or relating, but we really switch the communication to about us and not what the communicator was here about in the first place.



Speak for understanding

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Talk... but only to gain information and understanding.
 - Story time isn't necessary.
 - Ask questions?
 - Look for both verbal and non-verbal cues
 - Ask yourself if there is anything the speaker isn't saying but is part of the picture.

What's not being
said?

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - But if they are the one communicating, wouldn't they me the whole picture?
 - Are you of higher rank?
 - Are they nervous/scared of the topic?
 - They may be withholding important information trying to get your approval to dig deeper.

Get out of your
own way

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Am I getting in my own way of listening?
 - Uncomfortable Conversation
 - Worried about how you will look?
 - Unconfident
 - Unprepared
 - Incompetent

Get out of your
own head

- So What does it take? How do we listen better?
 - Discipline to “Get out of your head” = ability to be open and listen to the speaker

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The Leadership Bubble

- Professional Life

The Leadership Bubble

Why the bubble?

- What is the leadership bubble?
 - Employees may be afraid to ask questions.
 - If they question...
 - Will you feel they are challenging you?
 - Will you be disappointed in them/their performance?
 - Will you second guess their competence?



Leadership
Bubbles Create
Ineffective
Leaders

- What is the leadership bubble?
 - The leadership bubble yields ineffective communication and works to effectively make you less impactful as a leader.
 - Your bubble may be comfortable – but may not be reality.



Personal Life

- Personally:

Our communication skills reflect our intent. Our communications are true to our mindset and beliefs.

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Activity

Let's try this.....



Atmosphere

■ Takeaway:

- Create a trust atmosphere.
 - Control your environment (put away the stack of work!)
 - Create an open and safe environment for communication.

Practice the three “P’s”

■ Takeaway:

- Practice the 3-“P” Method
 - Presence: nodding, eye contact, exhibit openness... but that’s just a start
 - Paraphrase: repeat back the communication in your own words so the speaker knows you understand them
 - Probing: Ask questions that require more depth.

Save time...
Listen first.

- I don't have time for this!
 - You don't have time to not do this.
 - Increased active listening does take longer and may prolong the conversation.
 - But you don't have to have multiple follow-up conversations
 - Repeat work
 - Added frustration
 - Hurt relationships