

# Listening and Responding to Others

## Chapter Six

# Focus Questions

- What does the listening process include?
- How do listening and hearing differ?
- What obstacles interfere with effective listening?

# Focus Questions

- How is effective listening for information different from effective listening to support others?
- How we can improve our listening skills?

# How Important Is Listening?

- Communication usually focused on talking
- Listening is at least as important as talking
- Few of us devote as much energy to listening as we do to talking

# Studies Show...

- The average person spends 45% to 53% of waking time listening to others
- That's more time than we spend in any other communication activity

# Poor Listening May:

- Cause loss of information
- Have negative affects on professional lives
- Cause diminished learning
- Cause loss of performance on tests
- Hinder understanding of others
- Leave us unfamiliar/uninformed with important issues

# Good Listening

- Listening is the number one quality of effective managers
- Linked to
  - Resolution of workplace conflicts
  - Overall effectiveness

# The Listening Process

- Hearing:
  - physiological
- Listening:
  - Several step process



**Figure 6.1** THE LISTENING PROCESS  
Source: Adapted from Wood, 1997, p. 21.



# Mindfulness

- Focusing on what is happening in the moment
- Focusing on the people with whom they are interacting
- An ethical commitment to attend fully to others in particular moments
- It increases our understanding
- It promotes more complete communication by others

# Physically Receiving Communication

- We might receive it by hearing
  - sounds
  - interpreting nonverbal behaviors
  - reading lips
  - ASL

# Selecting and Organizing Communication

- What we attend to depends on:
  - physiological influences
  - expectations
  - cognitive structures
  - social roles
  - membership in cultures & social communities

# Interpreting Communication

- We put together all that we have selected and organized to make sense of communication

# Responding

- Includes
  - expressing interest
  - asking questions
  - voicing our own ideas on a topic
  - communicating attentiveness

# Remembering

- We forget a lot of what we hear
- After eight hours, we recall only about 35% of the information
- We selectively focus our attention to what is important

# Obstacles to Effective Listening

- Situational obstacles
  - message overload
  - message complexity
  - environmental distractions

# Obstacles to Effective Listening

- Internal obstacles
  - preoccupation
  - prejudgments
  - lack of effort
  - not recognizing diverse listening styles



# Forms of Ineffective Listening

- Pseudolistening
- Monopolizing
- Selective listening
- Defensive listening
- Ambushing
- Literal listening

# Guidelines for Informational and Critical Listening Skills

- Be mindful
- Control obstacles
- Ask questions
- Use aids to recall
- Organize information

# Guidelines for Relationship Listening Skills

- Be mindful
- Suspend judgment
- Strive to understand the other's perspective
  - minimal encouragers
  - paraphrasing
- Express support

# Skills for Other Listening Goals

- Listening for pleasure
- Listening to discriminate

# Summary

- How important is listening?
- Causes of poor listening
- The listening process
- Physically receiving communication
- Selecting and organizing communication

# Summary

- Interpreting communication
- Responding & remembering
- Obstacles to effective listening
- Forms of ineffective listening
- Listening skills