

Squiggly Careers PodSheets

How to be a brilliant listener



“ People in general do not know how to listen. They have ears that hear very well, but seldom have they acquired the necessary aural skills which would allow those ears to be used effectively for what is called listening.

Ralph G. Nichols and Leonard A. Stevens.
[HBR Article, Listening Well.](#)

? What gets in the way of your listening?

Leaky Listening

▶ We forget half of what we have heard within eight hours of listening.

▶ Two months after listening to a talk, the average listener only remembers about 25% of what was said.

Ideas for action to listen well

- 1 **Assess Your Listening Level**
- Level 1: Creates a safe environment
- Level 2: Minimises distractions
- Level 3: Seeks to understand
- Level 4: Observes non verbal cues
- Level 5: Empathises with emotion
- Level 6: Asks questions to clarify assumptions

Source: Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman

2 Withhold judgement

Our thoughts and feelings about what is being said can affect the quality of our listening. *If you have a different perspective, wait until someone has finished speaking and focus on seeking to understand them before sharing an alternative point of view.*

3 Increase listening that lasts

Within 10 minutes of a conversation ending, write down what you want to remember. *If you can create a visual reference, it will also help your listening learning last longer.*

Coach Yourself Questions

- ? What helps you to stay in listening mode?
- ? When does being a good listener matter most for you at work?

Recommended resources



Listening to people

HBR Article by Ralph G. Nichols and Leonard A. Stevens



5 Ways to listen better

TED Talk by Julian Treasure



How to ask better questions

Episode 216 of the Squiggly Careers podcast