

Keys to Active Listening: The TLRQ Process

Improve your ability to listen by using the TLRQ Process (Tune in-Question-Listen-Review).

Tune In. Come prepared to listen, be alert (well rested if possible), and determine the topic of the day's lecture ASAP. Once you know the topic, call to mind information you already know about it.

Question. Focus your listening by asking questions in your mind such as "What point is the speaker making?" "What devices for support is he/she using?" and "What do I need to specifically remember?" Using this process throughout the entire lecture helps lead to an understanding of main ideas, the speaker's organization of the material being covered, and supporting details. It also helps you distinguishing between relevant information and what's not as important to remember.

Listen. Listen for answers to the questions you call to mind. Try to anticipate what will be said, notice patterns of how the lecturer organizes ideas, and take in what is being communicated. Continue the questioning process as well, but the point is to understand what the professor is communicating; active alertness is *always required*, so tune out distractions.

Review. Check on the anticipated message after the message is delivered. To review, evaluate the message against your questions, fit ideas together, summarize ideas, and evaluate the meaning and impact of the message based on your circumstances. This review process should lead to further questions and keep you constantly tuned in to the lecture.

Hint: Taking effective notes will also help you with this process.

Eight Habits that Differentiate Effective and Non-Effective Listening

Improve your ability to listen by using the following eight habits to evaluate yourself and find areas for improvement.

THE NON-EFFECTIVE LISTENER	THE EFFECTIVE LISTENER	STRATEGIES
Thinks subject is dry/doesn't apply to self	Pays attention, asks "What's in it for me?"	Find areas of interest
Judges the delivery, gets hung up on errors	Judges the content, skips over the errors	Judge the content, not the delivery
Tends to enter into arguments quickly and make judgments before comprehension	Doesn't judge until comprehension is complete	Hold your fire, don't judge too soon
Listens for facts	Listens for central ideas	Listen for ideas and seek patterns
Uses one note-taking method (no matter the situation) and takes excessive notes	Has several note-taking methods and writes down only important information	Use different kinds of organization, be flexible (too many notes = less value)
Shows no energy, acts bored (passive)	Stays involved with the speaker (active)	Work at active listening
Is distracted easily	Fights distractions, can concentrate	Resist distractions
Does not exercise mind; seeks easy, recreational reading material	Exercises mind with difficult material and is familiar with harder subjects	Exercise your mind, build mental muscles