



TIPS TO LISTEN BETTER TODAY

Listening is the process of looking at the words and the other factors around the words (such as our non-verbal communication), and then interpreting the entire message. Here are seven things that you can do to start becoming a better listener right now.

1. When you're listening, listen. Don't talk on the phone, text message, clean off your desk, or do anything else.
2. Avoid interruptions. If you think of something that needs to be done, make a mental or written note of it and forget about it until the conversation is over.
3. Aim to spend at least 90% of your time listening and less than 10% of your time talking.
4. When you do talk, make sure it's related to what the other person is saying. Questions to clarify, expand, and probe for more information will be key tools.
5. Do not offer advice unless the other person asks you for it. If you are not sure what they want, ask!
6. Make sure the physical environment is conducive to listening. Try to reduce noise and distractions. ("Would you mind stepping into my office where I can hear you better?" is a great line to use.) If possible, be seated comfortably. Be close enough to the person so that you can hear them, but not too close to make them uncomfortable.
7. If it is a conversation where you are required to take notes, try not to let the note-taking disturb the flow of the conversation. If you need a moment to catch up, choose an appropriate moment to ask for a break.