

**“What I Really Need is Understanding”**

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.”  
- James 1:19

Read the following questions. Give yourself ...

4 points if the answer is ALWAYS

3 points if the answer is USUALLY

2 points if the answer is RARELY

1 point if the answer is NEVER

- \_\_\_ 1. Do I allow the speaker to finish without interrupting?
- \_\_\_ 2. Do I listen “between the lines;” that is, for feelings/motives?
- \_\_\_ 3. Do I actively try to retain important facts?
- \_\_\_ 4. When writing a message, do I listen for and set down the key facts and phrases?
- \_\_\_ 5. Do I repeat the details of a conversation to the other person in order to get everything right?
- \_\_\_ 6. Do I avoid getting hostile and/or agitated when I disagree with the speaker?
- \_\_\_ 7. Do I tune out distractions when listening?
- \_\_\_ 8. Do I make an effort to seem interested in what the other person is saying?

**SCORING:**

26 or higher: An excellent listener.

22 - 25: Better than average.

18 - 21: Room for improvement.

17 or lower: Get out there and practice your listening right away!

(From Dr. Stephen Ash, “The Career Doctor,” cited in the Michigan Department of Social Services No-Name Newsletter, P.O. Box 30037, Lansing, Michigan, 48909.)

The biggest reason people fail in relationships is their insensitivity to others. Good Leaders are Good Listeners!

David Burns, a medical doctor and professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, says: “The biggest mistake you can make in trying to talk convincingly is to put your highest priority on expressing your ideas and feelings. What most people really want is to be listened to, respected, and understood. The moment people see that they are being understood, they become more motivated to understand your point of view.”

**How to Improve Your Listening Skills****1. Don't Be Prejudiced by First Impressions.**

“Stop judging by mere appearances and make a right judgement.” - John 7:24

**Why first impressions are wrong ...**

- a) We tend to judge others by our own self-image.
- b) An impression based on a single contact is unfair.
- c) Focusing on one trait often blinds us to the total person.
- d) Both people have put their best foot forward.
- e) We are highly influenced by people's external appearance.
- f) We may be prejudiced by reports from others.

**2. Become Less Self-Centered.**

“Care about others as much as you care about yourselves.” - Philippians 2:4

### **3. Withhold Judgment and Criticism in the Beginning.**

*"He who answers before listening — that is his folly and shame." - Proverbs 18:14*

#### **Common wrong assumptions ...**

- a) Words mean the same thing to different people.
- b) There's only one way to see things.
- c) Everybody thinks like I do.
- d) I can figure out people's motives.

### **4. Keep Calm.** (Especially if you're being attacked)

*"Keep your head in all situations." - 2 Timothy 4:5*

### **5. Listen With Empathy.**

*"Jesus looked at him and loved him." - Mark 10:41*

#### **Four different styles of listening:**

- A) **Empathetic** – non-judgmental; capture the feeling of the person and reflect it back to them; summarize what they said; offer no advice. (Used by 22% of people.)
- B) **Advice** – offer unsolicited advice. Sometimes a person wants only an ear, however. May be too busy thinking of what to say rather than listening. (Used by 35% of people.)
- C) **Asking for information** – O.K. for first few minutes of the conversation, but after a while it becomes interrogation. Then it isn't conversation. (Used by 26% of people.)
- D) **Critic's response** – offering disapproval. You listen and write them off. (Used by 17% of people.)

### **6. Be An Active Listener.**

*"The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out." - Proverbs 20:5*

Listening is Wanting to Hear!

### **7. Paraphrase/Summarize to Clarify Communication.**

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated verbally.

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated vocally.

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated visually.

### **8. Recognize the Healing Power of a Listening Ear.**

*"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." - James 5:16*

#### **Healing can occur when ...**

- a) The other person feels accepted.
- b) The other person feels loved.
- c) When I become involved in the other person's life needs.

### **9. Do Something About What You Hear.**

*"Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it." - James 1:22*

**“What I Really Need is Understanding”**

“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.”  
- James 1:19

Read the following questions. Give yourself ...

4 points if the answer is ALWAYS

3 points if the answer is USUALLY

2 points if the answer is RARELY

1 point if the answer is NEVER

- \_\_\_ 1. Do I allow the speaker to finish without interrupting?
- \_\_\_ 2. Do I listen “between the lines;” that is, for feelings/motives?
- \_\_\_ 3. Do I actively try to retain important facts?
- \_\_\_ 4. When writing a message, do I listen for and set down the key facts and phrases?
- \_\_\_ 5. Do I repeat the details of a conversation to the other person in order to get everything right?
- \_\_\_ 6. Do I avoid getting hostile and/or agitated when I disagree with the speaker?
- \_\_\_ 7. Do I tune out distractions when listening?
- \_\_\_ 8. Do I make an effort to seem interested in what the other person is saying?

**SCORING:**

26 or higher: An excellent listener.

22 - 25: Better than average.

18 - 21: Room for improvement.

17 or lower: Get out there and practice your listening right away!

(From Dr. Stephen Ash, “The Career Doctor,” cited in the Michigan Department of Social Services No-Name Newsletter, P.O. Box 30037, Lansing, Michigan, 48909.)

The biggest reason people fail in relationships is their insensitivity to others. Good Leaders are Good Listeners!

David Burns, a medical doctor and professor of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, says: “The biggest mistake you can make in trying to talk convincingly is to put your highest priority on expressing your ideas and feelings. What most people really want is to be listened to, respected, and understood. The moment people see that they are being understood, they become more motivated to understand your point of view.”

**How to Improve Your Listening Skills****1. Don't Be \_\_\_\_\_ by First Impressions.**

“Stop judging by mere appearances and make a right judgement.” - John 7:24

**Why first impressions are wrong ...**

- a) We tend to judge others by our own \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) An impression based on a \_\_\_\_\_ contact is unfair.
- c) Focusing on one \_\_\_\_\_ often blinds us to the total person.
- d) Both people have put their best foot forward.
- e) We are highly influenced by people's \_\_\_\_\_ appearance.
- f) We may be prejudiced by reports from \_\_\_\_\_.

**2. Become Less \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.**

“Care about others as much as you care about yourselves.” - Philippians 2:4

### 3. Withhold Judgment and \_\_\_\_\_ in the Beginning.

*"He who answers before listening — that is his folly and shame." - Proverbs 18:14*

#### Common wrong assumptions ...

- a) Words mean the same thing to different people.
- b) There's only one way to see things.
- c) Everybody thinks like I do.
- d) I can figure out people's motives.

### 4. \_\_\_\_\_ . (Especially if you're being attacked)

*"Keep your head in all situations." - 2 Timothy 4:5*

### 5. Listen With \_\_\_\_\_ .

*"Jesus looked at him and loved him." - Mark 10:41*

#### Four different styles of listening:

- A) **Empathetic** – non-judgmental; capture the feeling of the person and reflect it back to them; summarize what they said; offer no advice. (Used by 22% of people.)
- B) **Advice** – offer unsolicited advice. Sometimes a person wants only an ear, however. May be too busy thinking of what to say rather than listening. (Used by 35% of people.)
- C) **Asking for information** – O.K. for first few minutes of the conversation, but after a while it becomes interrogation. Then it isn't conversation. (Used by 26% of people.)
- D) **Critic's response** – offering disapproval. You listen and write them off. (Used by 17% of people.)

### 6. Be An \_\_\_\_\_ Listener.

*"The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out." - Proverbs 20:5*

Listening is Wanting to Hear!

### 7. Paraphrase/Summarize to \_\_\_\_\_ Communication.

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated verbally.

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated vocally.

\_\_\_% of what we say is communicated visually.

### 8. Recognize the \_\_\_\_\_ Power of a Listening Ear.

*"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." - James 5:16*

#### Healing can occur when ...

- a) The other person feels accepted.
- b) The other person feels loved.
- c) When I become involved in the other person's life needs.

### 9. \_\_\_\_\_ About What You Hear.

*"Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it." - James 1:22*