

Test Your Listening Skills and Habits

This brief assessment is intended to give you some clues about your listening habits. Take a few minutes to complete the assessment. Not only will you learn about your listening habits, the habits of others with whom you engage in conversation will become more obvious.

When you're listening to someone:

Do you think about other things while you're trying to keep track of the conversation? Yes No

Do you think about what you're going to say next? Yes No

Do you listen with the intent to reply rather than with the intent to understand? Yes No

Do you break in with your own ideas before the other person has finished talking? Yes No

Do you listen primarily for facts rather than ideas? Yes No

Do you 'tune out' to things that you feel will be difficult to understand or that you think you've heard before? Yes No

Do you try to make it appear that you're paying attention when you're really not? Yes No

Do certain words or phrases prejudice you so that you don't listen objectively? Yes No

Do your thoughts turn to other things when you think a speaker will have nothing particularly interesting to say? Yes No

Do you finish other people's sentences? Or interrupt with a phrase or thought? Yes No

Do you assume from a person's appearance and delivery that he/she won't have anything important to say? Yes No

Are you easily distracted by outside sights and sounds? Yes No

Do you multi-task (text or continue to work on your computer) when assuring someone that you are really paying attention to them? Yes No

If you answered 'NO' to all of these questions, you are one of a kind! From an early age, we are taught and encouraged to express ourselves to get our points across.

Very few of us are taught how to listen. Good listening habits can be learned. It does take effort and attention and it is worth it!

If you really want to know how good your listening skills are, ask a couple of people whom you trust to go over this list and provide feedback! As small business owners, we need to keep our skills sharp.

