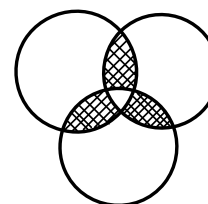
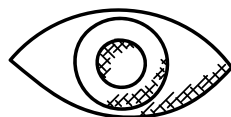
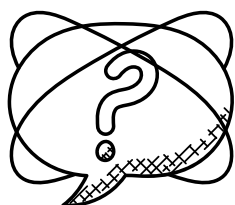
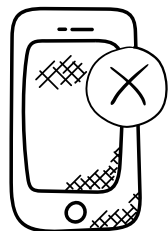


Six Levels of Listening



Level 1

The listener creates a safe environment in which difficult, complex, or emotional issues can be discussed.

Level 2

The listener clears away distractions like phones and laptops, focusing attention on the other person and making appropriate eye-contact. (This behavior not only affects how you are perceived as the listener; it immediately influences the listener's own attitudes and inner feelings. Acting the part changes how you feel inside. This in turn makes you a better listener.)

Level 3

The listener seeks to understand the substance of what the other person is saying. They capture ideas, ask questions, and restate issues to confirm that their understanding is correct.

Level 4

The listener observes nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, perspiration, respiration rates, gestures, posture, and numerous other subtle body language signals. It is estimated that 80% of what we communicate comes from these signals. It sounds strange to some, but you listen with your eyes as well as your ears.

Level 5

The listener increasingly understands the other person's emotions and feelings about the topic at hand, and identifies and acknowledges them. The listener empathizes with and validates those feelings in a supportive, non-judgmental way.

Level 6

The listener asks questions that clarify assumptions the other person holds and helps the other person to see the issue in a new light. This could include the listener injecting some thoughts and ideas about the topic that could be useful to the other person. However, good listeners never hijack the conversation so that they or their issues become the subject of the discussion.

From Zenger, J., & Folkman, J. (2016). What Great Listeners Actually Do. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>