

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LISTENING

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Anotation.

In this article, the author explains in detail about active and passive listening. Each is defined separately, explored through examples, and explains the differences between them.

Key words: Active listening, passive listening,

Introduction

The main difference between active and passive listening is that active listening is more effective than passive listening because individuals practicing active listening can comprehend the speaker's words more easily and also show the speaker that they are paying attention. Here is an explanation of each type of listening:

Active listening : Individuals practicing active listening pay close attention to the speaker and the intention behind their words, while consistently showing the speaker that they fully understand the ideas being expressed. Individuals that are actively listening often nod their heads, respond to statements with words that show they are listening and use other forms of body language to convey they are fully engaged. This form of listening not only helps individuals retain more information from their conversations but also gives the speaker a more positive impression of the listener's ability to pay attention to their words.

Passive listening : A key difference between active and passive listening is the response of the listener. When using passive listening, the listener doesn't respond to the speaker. Instead, professionals practicing active listening just process the information they are receiving without commenting on it or reacting. While many individuals prefer to use active listening in a professional setting, passive listening is still appropriate in some situations, such as during an academic lecture or speech.

Who is an Active Listener?

An active listener is a person who actively participates in the communication process by listening carefully to the message and observing how the information is taken in. The active listener pays attention to the content and style in tone, tone, body language, facial expressions and any expressions made by the speaker.

An active listener often looks for many details, nods his head as a sign of understanding at different times, asks questions to help him understand the topic, and summarises the content to show that he is a good follower.

Who is a Passive Listener?

The passive listener hears the message in part, and there is also an absence of sensitivity to the nuances, hidden meanings and non-verbal commitments involved in communication.

Basically, a passive listener allows the other person to speak without interruption or clarification, making communication with the passive listener ineffective and incomplete.

Level of Engagement

The key difference between active listening and passive listening lies in the level of engagement and involvement of the listener. Active listening requires the listener to be fully engaged, mentally present, and actively participating in the communication process. It involves focusing on the speaker, processing the information, and providing appropriate responses or feedback.

Passive listening, on the other hand, involves a lower level of engagement. The listener may be physically present and hearing the words but may not actively participate or contribute to the conversation. Passive listening can lead to a more passive or detached communication experience.

Focus and Attention

Active listening requires focused attention on the speaker and the message being conveyed. The active listener consciously directs their attention to the speaker, blocking out distractions and external noise. They concentrate on understanding the content, context, and nuances of the communication. Active listening involves being present in the moment and fully absorbing the information being shared.

Passive listening, on the other hand, may lack the same level of focus and attention. The listener's mind may wander, and their attention may be divided between the speaker and other thoughts or distractions. Passive listening may result in a less thorough understanding of the message and may miss important details or cues.

Responsiveness and Interaction

Active listening involves active participation and interaction with the speaker. The active listener provides verbal and non-verbal cues that demonstrate their engagement and understanding. They may nod, maintain eye contact, provide affirmations, and ask questions to seek clarification or further information. Active listening fosters a sense of collaboration and connection between the listener and the speaker.

Passive listening typically lacks the same level of responsiveness and interaction. The listener may not provide active feedback, ask questions, or engage in meaningful dialogue with the speaker. The communication may be one-sided, with limited opportunities for clarification or deeper understanding.

Benefits and Importance

Active listening offers several benefits and is considered a key skill in effective communication. It promotes better understanding, empathy, and rapport between individuals. Active listening enhances comprehension and reduces misunderstandings. It helps build stronger relationships, fosters trust, and encourages open and honest communication. Active listening is particularly valuable in situations that require problem-solving, conflict resolution, or emotional support.

Passive listening, although less involved, can still serve a purpose in certain contexts. It can be useful in situations where the primary objective is to gather information or where the listener's role is to observe and absorb without active participation. Passive listening can be beneficial in situations such as lectures, presentations, or when receiving instructions.

Application in Different Contexts

Active listening is highly valuable in various contexts, including personal relationships, professional settings, customer service, counseling, and leadership roles.

It plays a crucial role in building effective teams, resolving conflicts, and facilitating collaboration. Active listening is particularly important in fields such as counseling, coaching, and mentoring, where establishing trust and understanding is paramount.

Passive listening may find application in situations where the primary objective is to receive information or entertainment, such as listening to music, podcasts, or lectures. However, it is important to note that even in these contexts, active listening can enhance the overall experience by deepening comprehension and engagement.

Challenges and Considerations

Active listening requires effort, practice, and conscious engagement. It can be challenging in environments with distractions, time constraints, or when emotions run high. Active listening also requires active control over one's own biases, assumptions, and preconceived notions that may hinder understanding.

Passive listening, although requiring less effort, may result in a less fulfilling communication experience. It may lead to miscommunication, reduced comprehension, and missed opportunities for deeper connection and mutual understanding.

In conclusion, active listening is a valuable skill that can significantly improve communication and relationships in personal and professional settings. Individuals can build trust, reduce misunderstandings, and increase productivity by fully engaging in the conversation, understanding the speaker's message, and responding appropriately. On the other hand, passive listening can lead to missed information, misunderstandings, and decreased productivity. By recognizing the signs of passive listening and actively practicing active listening techniques, individuals can become more effective listeners and improve their communication skills. Effective communication is a two-way street; listening is just as important as speaking .

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