

Effective Listening

Listening, as opposed to **hearing**, is something you *choose* to do. And listening also requires one to understand what they hear, and this requires concentration. To concentrate one must anticipate what a teacher will be speaking about.

Review your notes from the last lecture and go to class prepared after reading assigned material. Use this method to cultivate a mindset that is needed for 100% concentration during a lecture.

Be an attentive listener! Give feedback to your teacher, who has an obligation to make his/her material understandable. If you do not understand what is being taught, ask questions. Professors appreciate it when a student wants clarification of material.

Guidelines to Effective Listening and Note Taking:

- Sit where the instructor will always see you, preferably in the front.
- Pay attention to content, not the lecturer's appearance or distracting habits. Judge the material, not the delivery.
- Put aside emotional concerns. If you disagree with what is being said, hold your judgment or fire until after class, then see the instructor.
- Find areas of interest; listen for ideas, not just facts, and words; put new ideas to work during the lecture by using your imagination.
- Intend to get down a good written record of the lecture material; be a flexible note taker.
- Listen for new words and watch for signals of important information; listen for examples that the instructor provides to define or illustrate main ideas. Note these examples with "EX" in your notes or textbook.
- Read in advance about the topics to be discussed in class and relate them to something you care about.
- Exercise your mind with challenging material; keep your mind open even if you hear emotional words.
- Be prepared to ask questions in class. Use facial expressions to let the instructor know that you don't understand an idea completely or you would like the information repeated.
- Don't stop listening or taking notes during discussion periods or toward the end of the lecture until the instructor concludes.
- Work at listening instead of pretending to listen.
- Resist external distractions such as someone coming in late to class, a cell phone ringing, maintenance mowing the grass, other students talking.