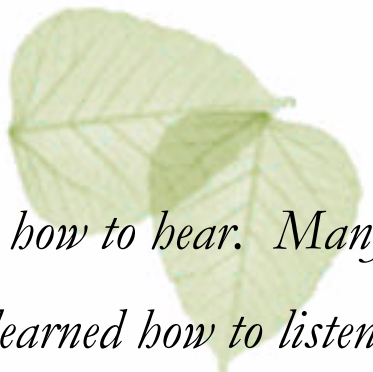


Dr. Jackie's Top 10 eTips Listening With More Than Your Ears

By Jackie Black, Ph.D.



*Most of us know how to hear. Many of us have never
learned how to listen.*

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(Excerpted from Dr. Jackie's book [Meeting Your Match—Cracking the code to successful relationships](#))

1. Your ability to listen effectively is at the top of your list in communicating because it results in your ability to receive, attend to, interpret and respond appropriately.
2. Effective listening is the ability to respond appropriately to the purpose of the sender.
3. Respond with verbal and nonverbal cues that let the person who is speaking know—actually prove—that the listener is listening *and* understanding. The sender wants to be understood!
4. Become consciously and actively engaged in the process of listening: hearing the words, creating a mental picture or model of the meaning of the words, experiencing what the sender is describing and feeling the feelings the sender is expressing.
5. Act like a good listener. Make eye contact, settle down, breathe deeply to ground yourself and become a receiver of information, thoughts and feelings being expressed by the sender.
6. Let go of your own agenda, opinions, advice and judgments while you are listening. Sit quietly and really be present with and for the speaker. Allow their words to be the only words and thoughts in your head.
7. Empathize with the sender by attempting to understand his or her thoughts and feelings. Restating or rephrasing what the sender has said can be useful when the sender is experiencing powerful emotions that s/he may not be fully aware of.

8. Body language, also known as Kinesics, is an important part of non-verbal communication behavior. Hand and arm gestures, facial expression, posture, eye contact and movement, nodding or shaking your head all impact the message sent or received.

9. Don't interrupt and don't impose your solutions or “fixes.” Ask clarifying questions when things aren't clear. Invite the sender to say more. Offer your understanding when you really “get it” by nodding, mirroring or reflecting back what you heard or understood, asking a relevant question or gesturing in some subtle way that you get it!

10. Pay attention to what isn't said—to feelings, facial expressions, gestures, posture and other nonverbal cues. Listen to the facial expression and body language as well as the words.

BONUS TIP: Don't be afraid to repeat what you thought you heard and then ask the sender if you understood what s/he said – e.g. “Did I hear that accurately?”

Only You can make it happen!

Dr. Jackie

