

HOW GOOD A LISTENER ARE YOU?

For each of the following statements, give yourself a rating. Don't take too long to think about your answer as then you try and put the 'right' answer. There is no right or wrong answer. Rate yourself as follows:

Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1	2	3	4

When someone is talking to you, do you:

1. Make people feel that you're interested in them and what they have to say?	
2. Think about what you want to say while others are talking?	
3. Acknowledge what the speaker says before offering your own point of view?	
4. Jump in before the other person has finished speaking?	
5. Allow people to complain without arguing with them?	
6. Offer advice before you're asked?	
7. Concentrate on figuring out what other people are trying to say, not just respond to the words they use?	
8. Share similar experiences of your own rather than inviting the speaker to elaborate on his or her experience?	
9. Get other people to tell you a lot about themselves?	
10. Assume you know what someone is going to say before he or she is finished?	
11. Restate messages or instructions to make sure you understood correctly?	
12. Make judgments about who is worth listening to and who isn't?	
13. Make a concerted effort to focus on the speaker and understand what he or she is trying to say?	
14. Tune out when someone starts to ramble on, rather than trying to get involved and make the conversation more interesting?	

15. Accept criticism without getting defensive?	
16. Think of listening as instinctive, rather than as a skill that requires making an effort?	
17. Make an active effort to get other people to say what they think and feel about things?	
18. Pretend to be listening when you're not?	
19. Respect what other people have to say?	
20. Feel that listening to other people complain is annoying?	
21. Make effective use of questions to invite people to say what's on their minds?	
22. Make distracting comments when other people are talking?	
23. Think other people consider you to be a good listener?	
24. Tell people you know how they feel?	
25. Don't lose your cool when somebody gets angry at you?	

Scoring

For the odd-numbered questions i.e. 1,3,5,7 etc., give yourself:

- Four points for each question you answered "Almost always"
- Three points for "Often"
- Two points for "Sometimes"
- One point for "Almost never."

For the even-numbered questions i.e. 2,4,6,7 etc., the scoring is reversed:

- Four points for "Almost never"
- Three for "Sometimes"
- Two for "Often"
- One for "Almost always"

Total the number of points.

85–96	Excellent
73–84	Above average
61–72	Average
49–60	Below average
25–48	Poor



1. If you got a high score on this questionnaire, congratulations. If you scored less well, pick out one bad habit at a time and practice letting others finish talking, and then let them know what you think they're saying before you say what's on your mind. Just this will go a long way.
2. During the next few days, pick out a couple of relationships that are important to you and try to identify two or three things that get in the way of your listening. Common interferences include: being preoccupied, trying to do two things at once, having negative thoughts about the speaker ("He's always complaining"), not being interested in the topic, wanting to say something about yourself, wanting to give advice, wanting to share something similar, being judgmental.

Once you identify two or three of your own bad listening habits, practice eliminating one of those impediments for a week, but only in conversations that you decide are important to you.