

Skill: Listening

The following is a list of active listening and response skills. Rate yourself on each, placing an X in the appropriate frequency column.

Behavior	Frequency		
	Rarely	sometimes	often
Showing signs you are listening (nods, uh huh)			
Reflecting back what has been said			
Asking questions to deepen the exchange			
Asking questions to clarify your understanding			
Periodically summarizing			
Checking for (mis)understanding when you feel emotions rising			
Holding the meta-view			
Offering metaphors			
Acknowledging			

Having rated yourself, what do you notice? What is coming up for you in response?

What keeps you from demonstrating these behaviors more often?

As a leader (or in general), which behavior would be most impactful to your team if you demonstrated it more often? What would it take for you to demonstrate it at least three times in the next week?

The following is a list of unhelpful listening behaviors that we all engage in from time to time. Rate yourself on each, placing an X in the appropriate frequency column.

Behavior	Frequency		
	rarely	sometimes	often
Becoming judgmental; not remaining open/neutral			
Feeling impatient with the speaker			
Only hearing superficial meaning			
"Topping" their story or relaying your own similar			
Interrupting or cutting someone off			
Ignoring what you don't understand or what doesn't interest you			
Mentally preparing rebuttals or your response			
Focusing on unimportant or trivial details			
Being distracted by your phone, email, etc.			
Being stuck in your own head; internal dialog			
Forgetting what was said in the past			
Filling pauses that don't need to be filled			
Abruptly changing the subject			

Upon reflection, what patterns do you notice? Do you exhibit those behaviors...

- **with pretty much everyone or only with certain people?**
- **in general, or more when you are under stress, driving to a deadline/decision, etc.?**

To what extent does your organization's leadership culture (or overall culture) promote active listening? To what extent does it tolerate/perpetuate the unhelpful behaviors?

Are there any specific unhelpful listening behaviors that you default to more of the time than you'd like? Why/how do you think that became the case?

As a leader (or in general), when is it okay to break some of the active listening "rules" like interrupting someone while they are speaking or checking your phone?

In your experience, are there any “double standards” when it comes to listening?

Additional Notes / Parting Thoughts:

Reach out with questions or feedback at: <https://beburnoutproof.com/Connect.html>

