



BUSINESS LISTENING TIPS

Remember....business leaders and executives love good listeners. The following are underutilized, listening-focused bits of intel.

General Tips - Set Yourself Apart

- Effective listening happens when you aren't doing anything else
- Take notes (pen/pencil and paper); writing things down shows you are listening; plus, it's insulting and embarrassing to go back and ask a person to repeat him/herself.
- Maintain good (but not awkward) eye contact.
- Pay attention to subtle non-verbal and tone of voice nuances (see below); they account for up to 93% of any verbal exchange.
- Set things aside when someone visits your cube, desk, or office and focus on their matter; 9 out of 10 times, the thing they're approaching you with is important to them and they want to be listened to.
- Seek first to understand, and then to be understood.
- Don't be judgmental when you're listening to someone; most people don't want you to give an answer...they want to come up with their own answers.

Lessons

1. Listen Generously and you will hear what's really going on.
2. Listen for the nuances
3. Listen to yourself
4. Be patient and don't interrupt
5. Get out of your head
6. Accelerate via words of pain

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Nuance Listening

- Eye gaze: A person looking directly into your eyes means he/she is interested and paying attention. Breaking eye contact and frequently looking away means the person is probably distracted, uncomfortable, or trying to conceal his or her real feelings.
- Blinking: People often blink more rapidly when they are feeling distressed or uncomfortable. For example, a poker player might blink less frequently because he is purposely trying to appear unexcited about the hand he was dealt.
- Pursed lips: Might be an indicator of disapproval, or distrust.
- Lip biting: Might be an indicator of stress and anxiety.
- Mouth turns: A mouth turned slightly up might mean that the person is feeling happy or optimistic; a slight downturn can be an indicator of sadness or disapproval.
- Clenched fist: Might indicate anger or solidarity.
- Crossed arms: Might indicate a person is feel defensive, self-protective, or closed-off.
- Standing with hands on hips: Might indicate readiness, control, or aggression.
- Clapping the hands behind the back: Might indicate boredom, anxiety, or anger.
- Finger tapping or fidgeting: Might indicate boredom, impatience, or frustration.
- Crossed legs: Might indicate a person is feeling closed off or in need of privacy.

Listen → **Trust** → **Opportunity**



BUSINESS WRITING — Helpful Resources

Rules

- 1: Start with them
- 2: Fewer adjectives and adverbs
- 3: Brevity wins the reader
- 4: Quadruple check
- 5: Read it out loud

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Helpful Resources

- Eliminate auditory distractions: put your earbuds in and listen to white, brown, or pink noise ([simplynoise.com](https://www.simplynoise.com))
- *Woe is I*, by Patricia O'Connor ([amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com))
- Chicago Manual of Style ([chicagomanualofstyle.org](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org))
- Associated Press Stylebook ([apstylebook.com](https://www.apstylebook.com))

General Writing Rules

- Don't tell the reader; **show** the reader.
- Write in the morning. Some operate better at night, but most brains operate better after they've been rested.
- Write consistently. A best-selling author was once asked, "Do you wait until you're inspired to write?" He responded: "Yes. Thankfully, I'm inspired every day at 9 a.m."
- Do whatever you need to do to understand your audience—their needs, their wants, their insecurities, their heroes, their enemies and competitors, the words they use, the way they dress, how they learn, how they are entertained, and how they spend money.
- In a business setting, use less adjectives and adverbs; stick to the facts.
- Read more and you will write better.
- You know a good editor when he/she drives you nuts—someone who pushes you to show more, tell less, and be more technically correct (with your words).
- When you have writer's block, go for a walk, exercise, or play an instrument.
- Practice using tips from [dailywritingtips.com](https://www.dailywritingtips.com).
- Practice letting your brain write, uninhabited by your desire to make corrections. Sit calmly for a couple minutes at the keyboard, eyes closed, and eliminate distractions. Then open your eyes, look around, spot an object, set a timer for five minutes, and start writing—integrating that object into your sentences and/or story.
- There isn't great writing...only great re-writing. When writing the first draft, DO NOT USE THE BACKSPACE BUTTON.

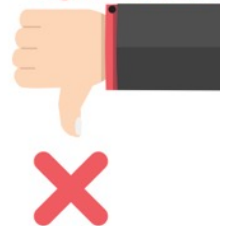
A good listener...

Uses eye contact appropriately.
Is attentive and alert to a speaker's verbal and nonverbal behavior.
Is patient and doesn't interrupt (waits for the speaker to finish).
Is responsive, using verbal and nonverbal expressions.
Asks questions in a nonthreatening tone.
Paraphrases, restates or summarizes what the speaker says.
Provides constructive (verbal or nonverbal) feedback.
Is empathic (works to understand the speaker).
Shows interest in the speaker as a person.
Demonstrates a caring attitude and is willing to listen.
Doesn't criticize, is nonjudgmental.
Is open-minded.



A bad listener...

Interrupts the speaker (is impatient).
Doesn't keep eye contact (eyes wander).
Is distracted (fidgeting) and does not pay attention to the speaker.
Is not interested in the speaker (doesn't care, daydreaming).
Gives the speaker little or no (verbal or nonverbal) feedback.
Changes the subject.
Is judgmental.
Is closed-minded.
Talks too much.
Is self-preoccupied.
Gives unwanted advice.
Too busy to listen.



The Javlin Equation – *This is Who We Are*

Work Hard to Win

5. **Bring It.** We are in a competitive business. Someone, somewhere, is working late trying to gain an advantage. That's why we approach every task with energy, focus, enthusiasm and intensity. Mistakes will happen, but it will never be for lack of effort.
6. **Be Creative.** Don't think outside the box, get rid of the box altogether. Be curious and explore potential alternatives. Consider broad perspectives, craft solutions that address the individual circumstances.
7. **Make Decisions.** Think twice, act once, and then own it. By the time we make a decision, a competitor may have already decided. That's why we push decision making authority as close to the action as possible.
8. **Take Risks.** Risk is inherent to what we do. Do not be afraid to make a mistake. Understand the risk, calculate it, and then make a bet.
9. **Have Fun.** Working hard and earning a good living is a drag if you aren't...having....fun. Rewarding work is fun in itself; however, if you laugh often and enjoy the people you work with everyday...it is a total blast.
10. **Keep Score.** Measure our results every day, every week, every month, and every year. Know performance metrics like you know your cellphone number. Improve outcomes consistently.

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Communicate Effectively

11. **Listen Generously.** Be present, pay attention, and seek to understand before being understood. Listening is more than not talking. Being present means not checking your e-mail or looking at your phone when someone is talking to you.
12. **Speak Straight.** Speak honestly and clearly. Windy roads are hard to navigate and take more time. Straight roads are easy to follow and they get you there quicker. Be willing to take positions that may be unpopular or non-traditional. Do not avoid conflict.
13. **Set and Ask for Expectations.** "What did you expect?" means two people are at fault. Always create mutually understood expectations. Communicate promptly when expectations are not going to be met.
14. **Limit E-Mail.** Personal interaction first, phone call second, and e-mail last. The best vehicle for complex decision making and debate is person to person or group conversation. E-mail is a great tool to inform and update the team; it is not a good tool to make or vet complex decisions.

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Debate Productively

15. **Always Ask Why.** Healthy and vigorous debate results in better decisions. Silent dissent has no place and is corrosive. Challenge everyone but do it in a productive way.
16. **Gather the Facts.** There's always more to a story than you think. Ask questions and discover both the pros and the cons to every situation before making conclusions and judgments.
17. **Understand the Context.** What's the story surrounding the facts? Understand everyone's perspectives. Evaluate the circumstances. Make decisions on the facts and context.
18. **Accept the Outcome.** When the debate ends, WE move forward as a team, communicating the decision as OUR decision.

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Grow and Develop Talent

19. **Learn and Grow.** Get better. Read daily. Constantly evaluate and re-evaluate every aspect of your performance to find ways to improve. Never be satisfied. Gain knowledge and develop.
20. **Seek Challenges.** Always ask for more. Look for the thing that no one else is doing, or everyone is avoiding, and go after it. Tackle the things you don't want to do first. Challenging yourself and others is how we improve.
21. **Teach Others.** The best way to learn is to teach. Educate and develop everyone. Share knowledge. Explain why we do things. The investment that we make in developing our talent is an investment we make in our future.
22. **Seek and Provide Feedback.** Ask for and give meaningful, timely, specific, and impactful, criticism, acknowledgement and appreciation. Feedback influences future performance, often creating forward progress. Constructive feedback should be called feedforward.

The Javlin Equation – *This is Who We Are*

Be a Team

23. **Everyone is a Leader.** Performance starts with you. Demonstrate the behaviors you expect from others. Don't wonder who is in charge, it's you.
24. **Ego at the Door.** Don't try to be the smartest person in the room and don't let your ego get in the way of doing what is best for the team. Challenges or constructive criticism are invitations to improve. Do not take them personally and do not act defensively.
25. **Embrace Change.** Nothing stays the same. Be excited by change. Be energized and inspired by both the challenges and the possibilities.
26. **Learn from Mistakes.** Blame erodes while learning builds. We learn from our mistakes. Identify the mishap, write out and share the details, learn from it, and then move on. Try not to make the same mistake again.
27. **Celebrate Success.** When a good thing happens, stop and call it out. Take time to recognize employees, team, company, and partners' success.

The Javlin Equation – *This is Who We Are*

Act like an Owner

28. **Think Long Term.** Our number one objective is to drive value for our partners, the company, and our team. We do that by thinking beyond days, weeks or months.
29. **Grow the Business.** Everyone sells. Start each day by asking, “How can I generate new business today?” Generate opportunities from existing partners as well as new potential partners.
30. **Pay Attention to Costs.** Cash is king. Spend money like it is your own. Use it sparingly. Defend it vigorously.