

Principles of Constructive Listening

Table D.1a Conditions and barriers to constructive listening

Preconditions for constructive listening

- Active attitude: pay attention (face speaker); keep an open mind
- Show attention (maintain eye contact, engage yourself)
- Prove attention: provide feedback
- Defer judgement (don't interrupt without a good reason)
- Show respect and respond appropriately
- Minimise external and internal distraction

Barriers to constructive listening

- Psychic: bias or prejudice
- Language differences or accents
- Environment: noise; talking to your neighbour
- Emotional: worry, fear, or anger
- Concentration: lack of attention span
- Judgement: making assumptions about what the speaker is thinking or giving your opinion on how you handled a 'similar' situation
- Multi-tasking

Sources: www.psychologytoday; www.mindtools.com; own observations