Listening Skills

Listening is important because in order to communicate effectively, you also need to be able to listen! Hearing and listening are two different things because although you may hear someone, it is important to understand what they mean. Comprehension is key.

Tips for Being a Good Listener

- Listen for main ideas
  - Pay attention when speaker uses words like “my main point is…” or “you should take away that…”
- Listen/watch for verbal and nonverbal clues
  - Hand motions, gestures, volume changing, excited tone in voice
- Avoid making predictions
  - Focus on what the person is saying in the present moment instead of focusing on what is to come.
- Focus on the words, not the person
- Don’t let your mind wander
- Keep an open mind
  - Before passing judgments, listen to the entire message
- Respond appropriately
  - During one on one conversations, nod and make comments when appropriate
- Ask Questions, but finish listening before you begin to speak
- Give constructive feedback