



SkillSharpener Web Extra

Active listening self test

Active listening involves listening with all of the senses. As well as giving full attention to the speaker.

In the July issue of *The Customer Communicator*, many aspects of active listening are discussed. As the name suggests, "active listening" means fully focusing on what is being said rather than just passively "hearing" the message.

In addition to the activities suggested in the *SkillSharpener*, try using this Listening Skills Checklist. Reps may complete the checklist and score themselves individually. The checklist serves as both a refresher on active listening skills and an important indicator of where improvement is needed.

Rate your listening skills

Answer the following statements with a 1 for "rarely," 2 for "sometimes," and 3 for "always."

1. I avoid interrupting the customer while he or she is speaking.	1	2	3
2. I listen for the customer's key points.	1	2	3
3. I try to understand the emotions the customer is voicing.	1	2	3
4. I give the customer regular feedback at appropriate points in the conversation (i.e., by saying "yes," "uh-huh," "I see," etc.).	1	2	3
5. I remain calm even if the customer is frustrated or angry.	1	2	3
6. I listen with an open mind.	1	2	3
7. I don't allow outside distractions to interrupt the conversation.	1	2	3
8. I take notes of important points.	1	2	3
9. I wait for the customer to finish to ask clarifying questions.	1	2	3
10. I make sure I understand the customer's point of view before responding.	1	2	3
11. I actively listen even though the customer's issue appears to be routine.	1	2	3
12. I summarize the customer's key points by paraphrasing.	1	2	3

Scoring:

32 to 36 — You're an excellent, involved listener. Keep up the good work!

26 to 31 — You're on your way to being an active listener, but you need to work on a few areas.

21 to 25 — You're a fair listener, but could greatly improve the service you provide by building better listening skills.

12 to 20 — You may be hearing what your customers are saying, but you're not listening. Make improvement a priority.



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