



Listen Up

Practice different types of listening to develop better communication skills

TIME

20-30 minutes



TEAM STAGE

Storming, Norming

MATERIALS

Computer, projector, paper, writing utensils

SUMMARY

In this activity, participants will watch and listen to a video clip in different ways and discuss their observations about what they see, hear, and interpret.

SET UP

- Choose a video clip to use for this activity that includes one person speaking. Some examples include *commencement addresses*, *famous monologues*, or *acting reels*.
- Be prepared with a computer and projector with audio/visual capabilities so that the video clips can be played for the group.
- Make sure that each participant has a piece of paper and a writing utensil.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Tell participants that they are going to view the clip in three different pieces and will be asked to make observations about each one.
- Play the first third of the video clip without sound or subtitles.
- Have participants write down what judgements they have formed about the person in the clip so far.
- Then, ask participants to share what they think about this clip and its message based just on what they can see.
- After this discussion, play the next third of the video clip. This time, cover the projector so participants are only listening to audio of the clip.
- Have participants write down what new or changed judgements they have about the person in the clip.
- Then, ask participants to share what they think about this particular clip based solely on what they could hear.
- For the last part of the video clip, allow participants to watch and listen to the clip with no restrictions.
- Ask participants to share their responses to the following questions. Encourage them to refer to their notes to help them remember their earlier thoughts.
 - What did you pick up on this time around?
 - What distracted you? How did that affect your ability to listen?
 - What do you believe about the person in the clip now?



VARIATIONS

- This activity can also be done with three separate video clips instead of one clip played in three pieces to show a wider range of what different communication styles look and sound like.
- Instead of using pre-made video clips, have participants create their own short videos on topics of importance to them to use for this activity. Or, have participants pair up to tell each other stories for each round. For the first round, have participants cover their ears or wear headphones with music so that they cannot hear, for the second round have them cover their eyes so they cannot see, and for the third round allow them to listen and watch.
-  **Online:** To facilitate this activity virtually, show the video clip using the share screen and sound features on the video conferencing platform. The conversations between rounds can happen in the main meeting room with all participants or in breakout rooms with smaller groups of participants, depending on the size of the group. [\[click here for video\]](#)
-  **Asynchronous:** To facilitate this activity asynchronously, share the links to your chosen video and the instructions in a shared document that all participants can access. Ask them to share their thoughts after watching each clip in a collaborative discussion thread.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

- What:
 - How would you describe your experience listening to the three different videos?
 - What information did you gain or lose in each round of the activity?
- So What:
 - What are some factors that affect the quality of our listening?
 - Why is it important for us to practice our listening skills?
- Now What:
 - What is one thing you want to focus on that would improve your ability to listen?
 - How can we foster a culture of listening in our group?

 **Facilitator Note:** These questions can be used to guide your debrief, however, pick the questions that best match your group's experience and add or change questions as needed.