

Condensed
Sample Version

Improving Your Listening Skills Leader's Guide



Session Goal and Process

Explore **role of listening**
Feelings and needs are taken into account

Discover our own strengths and challenges
More relaxed and open

Practice using approaches in **appropriate situations**
Create action plans to apply our new skills

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Session Goal and Process

What we're listening to:

- Our feelings and needs are taken into account
- We're more relaxed and open
- We feel we can achieve our objectives

Our goal is to build your listening skills to help you get these kinds of results when you communicate with others.

The Personal Listening Learning Model will inform each step of today's process. You will:

- Explore the role that listening plays in communication
- Learn about the five approaches to listening
- Discover our own listening approaches, including our strengths and challenges
- Practice recognizing and using effective approaches for different listening situations
- Create action plans to help apply our new listening skills

My personal goals for this session:

Payton Jones 2

Participant Workbook

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Begin the session by introducing yourself and addressing session logistics such as bathroom locations, respectful operating practices, break times, and parking lot for questions.

SAY:

- ☑ Have you ever noticed how good it feels when someone really listens to you? When we're listened to:
 - ☑ Our feelings and needs are taken into account
 - ☑ We're more relaxed and open
 - ☑ We feel we can achieve our objectives
- The goal of this program is to build your listening skills to help you get these kinds ☑ of results when you communicate with others.
- Of course, there are different ways to do this, but we're going to be using a proven method called the Personal Listening Learning Model.

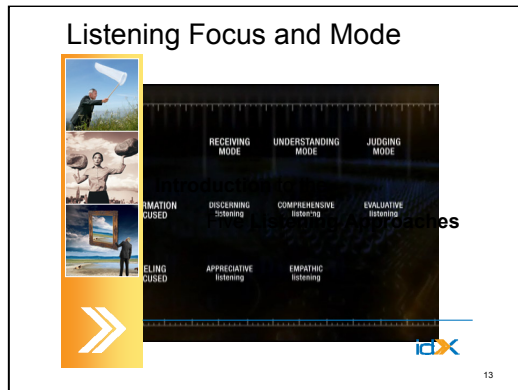
SAY:

After we are introduced to this model, it will inform each step of today's process.

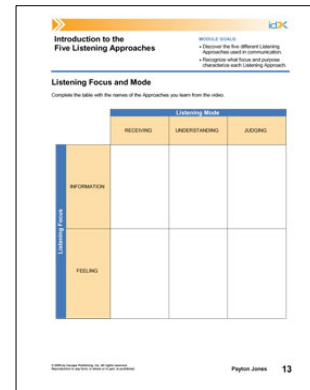
- ☑ First, we'll explore the role that listening plays in communication.
- ☑ Then, we'll learn about the five approaches to listening.
- ☑ Next, we'll discover our own listening approaches, including our strengths and challenges.
- ☑ Then, we'll practice recognizing and using effective approaches for different listening situations.
- ☑ Finally, we'll create action plans to help apply our new listening skills.

TRANSITION:

Before we get started, let's take a few minutes to learn about each other and our listening experiences.



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Introduction to the Five Listening Approaches

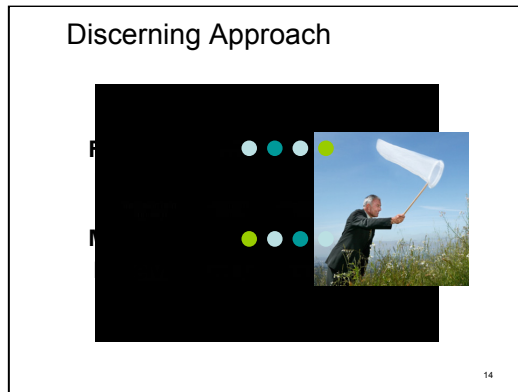
SAY:

- [🎧] Listening is the activity of attending to and internalizing what is being communicated.
- Each of us listens for different things and in different ways when we communicate with others.
- Let's watch a video that introduces different approaches to listening.
- As you watch, complete the table in your workbook with the names of the five Listening Approaches as they are introduced.

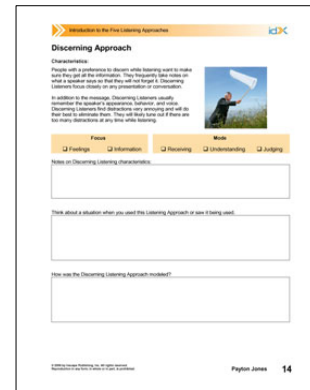
[🎧] Video segment ***“Introduction to the Listening Approaches.”***

SAY:

- Now that we have a better understanding of the different conditions that form the Listening Approaches, let's look at each of the five approaches in more detail.
- We'll start with the Discerning Listening Approach.



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[🎧] Video segment “*Discerning Approach.*”

ASK:

[🎧] What was the focus of Discerning Listening? What was the mode?

Listen for: [🎧] information and [🎧] receiving. Instruct participants to record this information.

ASK:

What were some of the characteristics you learned about this approach?

Listen for: getting accurate and thorough information, concentrating, taking notes, clarifying, being annoyed by distractions.

INSTRUCT:

- Think about a situation when you used this Listening Approach or saw it being used.
- Write this situation in your workbook, including why you think it modeled Discerning Listening.

Give participants 1–2 minutes to note their situations.

SAY:

Let’s move on to another of the Listening Approaches — Comprehensive Listening.



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[🎧] Video segment **“Evaluative Approach.”**

ASK:

[🎧] What was the focus of Evaluative Listening? What was the mode?

Listen for: [🎧] information and [🎧] judging. *Instruct participants to record this information.*

ASK:

What were some of the characteristics you learned about this approach?

Listen for: scrutinizing, looking for logic and speaker’s intention, comparing information with their personal experiences and values, critiquing, skepticism.

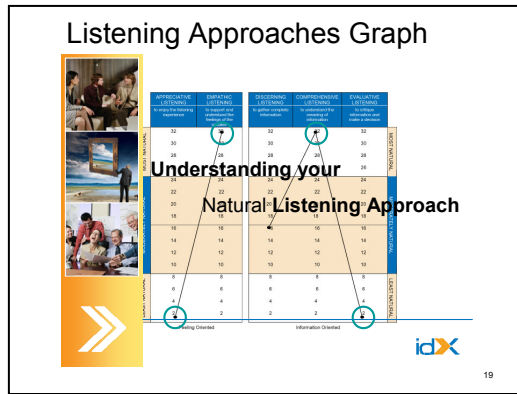
INSTRUCT:

- Think about a situation when you used this Listening Approach or saw it being used.
- Write this situation in your workbook, including why you think it modeled Evaluative Listening.

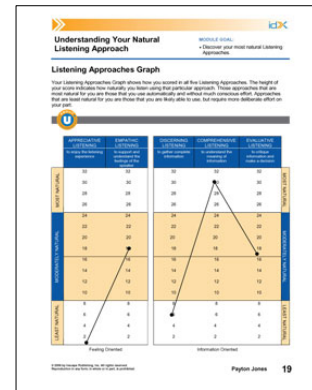
Give participants 1–2 minutes to note their situations.

SAY:

Let’s move on now to a Listening Approach that focuses on feelings — Appreciative Listening.



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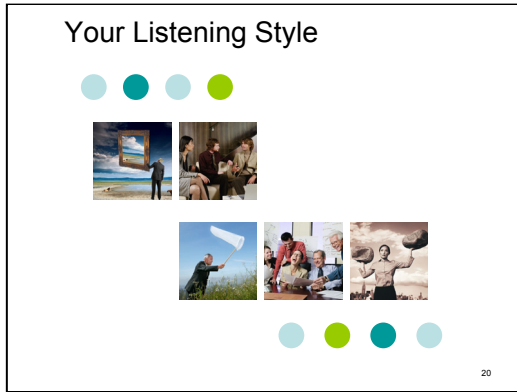
Understanding Your Natural Listening Approach

SAY:

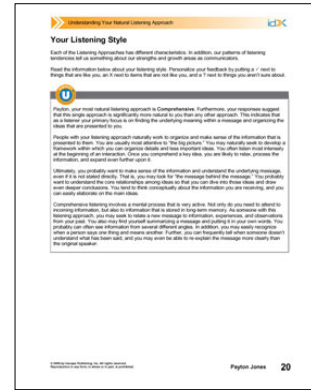
- [✓] Each of us has developed certain tendencies while listening.
- The more we think and behave in a certain way, the more ingrained those tendencies become until, over time, we find we have developed a particular pattern of listening.
- While all of us have probably used each of the approaches at one time or another, it is our most natural approaches that have the greatest effect on how we communicate.
- Let's now look at our Personal Listening Approach feedback to begin to understand what comes naturally to each of us.

SAY:

- [✓] Your individualized Listening Approach Graph is based on how you responded to the prework, and it shows how you scored in each of the five Listening Approaches.
- [✓] The high points on the graph represent the Listening Approaches you find most natural when communicating with others.
- [✓] The low points on the graph represent the Listening Approaches that are least natural for you. You are probably able to use these approaches, but they require more effort on your part.
- Our overall listening style is defined by this combination of highs and lows in the five approaches.



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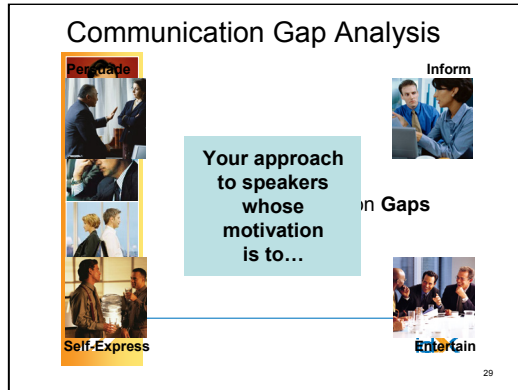
INSTRUCT:

- [✓] Take a few minutes to read through the description of your listening style.
- Personalize the description by putting a checkmark next to things that are like you, an “X” by things that are not like you, and a question mark next to things that you aren’t sure about.

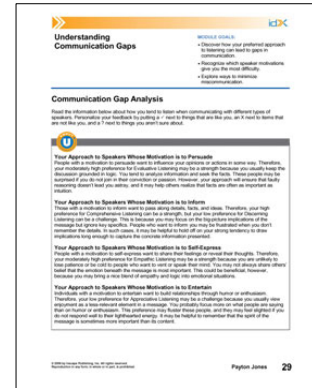
Give participants 2–3 minutes to read and personalize.

TRANSITION:

Now let’s explore how our preferred Listening Approaches influence our listening strengths and challenges.



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Understanding Communication Gaps

SAY:

- [☺] Many times a day, we are faced with situations, major and minor, that require us to communicate effectively.
- Matching our listening approach with the motivation of the speaker can be challenging. At times, our natural tendencies lead us to choose less-than-ideal listening approaches when we communicate with others.
- Let's start by discovering how we listen when faced with each of the speaker motivations.

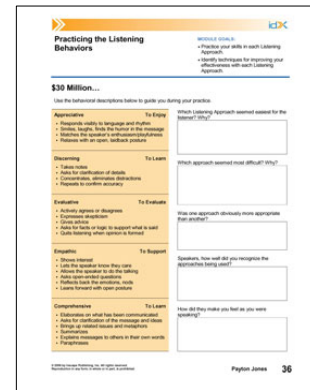
INSTRUCT:

- [☺] The **Communication Gap Analysis** in your workbook provides individualized feedback about how you tend to listen when in communication with different types of speakers.
- [☺] Your feedback is based on your level of preference for the Listening Approach that best corresponds with the speaker motivation.
- Read your feedback and personalize the description with checkmarks, X's, and question marks as you did before.

Give participants 3–4 minutes to read and personalize their feedback.



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Practicing Listening Behaviors

SAY:

- [~0] By practicing the signature skills of each Listening Approach we can begin to recognize the effects of good listening when we interact with others.
- We'll start by having you find a partner you haven't worked with yet in this session.

INSTRUCT:

- Choose which partner will speak first and which one will be the listener.
- Speakers, talk about [~0] what you would do if you were given 30 million dollars.
- Listeners, secretly choose a Listening Approach and listen using those behaviors for one minute. Use the approach descriptions in your workbook as a guide.
- When time is up, the speakers will try to guess which approach was being used and quickly give feedback about the listeners' abilities in that approach.
- Then the listeners will secretly choose another approach and the speakers will pick up where they left off talking about the topic. Don't start over.
- We will do this until all five approaches have been used.

For each round, give participants a minute to talk and 30 seconds to debrief.

INSTRUCT:

- Now, take a couple of minutes to discuss
 - Which listening approach seemed easiest for the listener? Why?
 - Which approach seemed most difficult? Why?
 - Was one approach obviously more appropriate than another?
 - Speakers, how well did you recognize the approaches being used?
 - How did they make you feel as you were speaking?
- Take notes on your experiences in your workbook.

Give participants two minutes to discuss.

Dinner with anyone...



If you could have dinner with anyone – past or present – **who** would it be and **what** would you discuss?

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Dinner with anyone...

Use the behavioral descriptions below to guide your listening practice.

Approaches	To Enjoy	Which Listening Approach seemed easiest for the speaker? Why?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on what to respond and reply. • Seeks to "right" back the speaker or the message. • Notices the speaker's nonverbal behavior. • Responds with an open, feedback practice. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks to understand the speaker's perspective. • Seeks to understand the speaker's feelings. • Seeks to understand the speaker's needs. • Seeks to understand the speaker's values. • Seeks to understand the speaker's beliefs. • Seeks to understand the speaker's attitudes. • Seeks to understand the speaker's opinions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's ideas. • Seeks to understand the speaker's conclusions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's recommendations. • Seeks to understand the speaker's suggestions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's solutions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's plans. • Seeks to understand the speaker's actions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's behaviors. • Seeks to understand the speaker's habits. • Seeks to understand the speaker's routines. • Seeks to understand the speaker's patterns. • Seeks to understand the speaker's trends. • Seeks to understand the speaker's cycles. • Seeks to understand the speaker's rhythms. • Seeks to understand the speaker's moods. • Seeks to understand the speaker's emotions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's feelings. • Seeks to understand the speaker's attitudes. • Seeks to understand the speaker's opinions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's ideas. • Seeks to understand the speaker's conclusions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's recommendations. • Seeks to understand the speaker's suggestions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's solutions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's plans. • Seeks to understand the speaker's actions. • Seeks to understand the speaker's behaviors. • Seeks to understand the speaker's habits. • Seeks to understand the speaker's routines. • Seeks to understand the speaker's patterns. • Seeks to understand the speaker's trends. • Seeks to understand the speaker's cycles. • Seeks to understand the speaker's rhythms. • Seeks to understand the speaker's moods. • Seeks to understand the speaker's emotions. 		
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INSTRUCT:

- [🔊] Now, switch roles. This time, speakers, answer the question, “If you could have dinner with anyone, past or present, who would it be and what would you discuss?”
- Just as before, the new listeners will secretly choose a Listening Approach and listen using the behaviors of that approach for one minute.
- When time is up, the speakers will try to guess which approach was being used and quickly give feedback about the listeners’ abilities in that approach.
- Use your workbook as a guide if you need to.

For each round, give participants a minute to talk and 30 seconds to debrief.

INSTRUCT:

Once again, discuss the experience, using the questions in your workbook.

Give participants two minutes to discuss.

ASK:

- Let’s come back together now and talk about your experiences.
- When you were listeners, how did it feel to use the approaches you identified earlier as more challenging?
- What made these approaches more challenging for you?

Take responses and facilitate discussion.

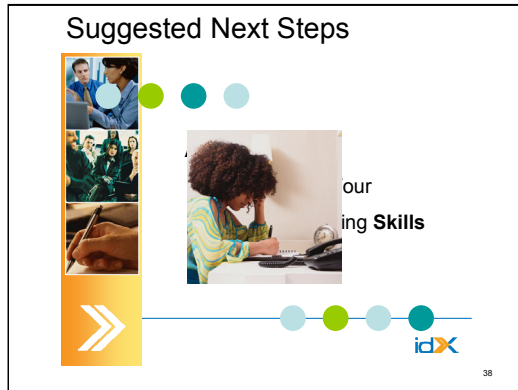
ASK:

- When you were speaker, which of the approaches worked well for you? Why?
- Which approach was least effective for you? Why?

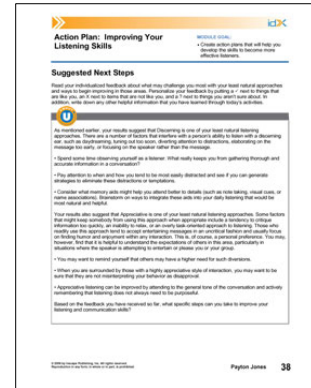
Take responses and facilitate discussion.

TRANSITION:

Now that we recognize that all Listening Approaches have a place in good communication, and we understand which come more naturally and which will take more energy for us, let’s focus on creating an action plan.



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Action Plan: Improving Your Listening Skills

SAY:

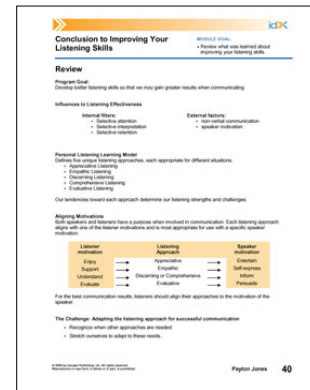
- [☺] Its one thing to learn about better listening, but even this knowledge won't help improve our communication if we don't put it into action.
- Let's start by focusing on your listening challenges.

SAY:

- [☺] Your individualized feedback provides a guide to what may challenge you most about your least natural approaches, and it suggests ways to begin improving.
- Take a few minutes now to read through the suggested next steps in your feedback.
- Personalize it with checkmarks, X's, and question marks and write down any other helpful information that you have learned through today's activities.



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Participant Workbook

Conclusion to Improving Listening Skills

SAY:

- [🗣️] Our goal for this session was to develop better listening skills and gain greater results when communicating.
- [🗣️] First, we explored how developing our listening skills can greatly improve our memory, work productivity, and possibly even financial success.
- [🗣️] We learned about internal selection filters that can influence our ability to listen effectively, as well as external factors like non-verbal communication.

SAY:

- [🗣️] We used the Personal Listening Learning Model to understand that there are five different Listening Approaches, each characterized by its own unique motivations and behaviors.
- [🗣️] Using this model, we learned that each of us tend to find some Listening Approaches more natural than others, and these tendencies help determine our listening strengths and challenges.

SAY:

- We then explored how each Listening Approach is appropriate for different situations based on the motivations of the speaker.
- In most cases, it is the responsibility of listeners to align their approaches to the speaker for the best communication results.

SAY:

Finally, we looked at the behaviors that characterize each Listening Approach, and we spent time practicing each approach to develop our skills in adapting to the communication needs of the speaker.