LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

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**Learning Outcomes**

- To describe fundamental aspects of language and communication
- To explain key elements of listening and speaking
LISTENING

- What do good listeners look like?
  - Verbally
  - Nonverbally

- Listening is not a natural process.

- Listening requires effort (active not passive)

- All listeners do not receive the same message.
  - We hear uniquely different messages
  - Physiological factors, social roles, cultural background, personal interests, and needs
LISTENING VS. HEARING

- **Hearing** - the process in which sound waves strike the eardrum and cause vibrations that are transmitted to the brain.

- **Listening** occurs when the brain reconstructs these electrochemical impulses into a representation of the original sound that gives them meaning.
LISTENING STAGES

- **Attending** – paying attention; mindfulness

- **Understanding/Interpreting**
  - Assigning meaning to messages
  - **PRINCIPLE**: The greater the similarity between individuals, the greater the likelihood for more accurate understanding.
  - **PRINCIPLE**: People understand best if they can relate what they are hearing to something they already know.
  - **PRINCIPLE**: You understand best that which you also experience.
Listening Stages (CONT’D)

- **Responding**: Giving observable feedback to speaker
  - Clarifying a message
  - Care about what the speaker says
  - Confirming understanding of a message
  - Nonverbal responses
  - Feedback – verbal responses

- **Remembering**
  - What we actually remember of the message that we heard
FAULTY LISTENING BEHAVIORS

- Pseudo listening: imitation, or fake listening; pretending to listen

- Selective listening: responding only to the parts of a speakers remarks that interest the receiver and rejecting everything else

- Defensive listening: taking innocent comments as personal attacks
KEY LISTENING SKILLS

- **Stop:** Turn Off Competing Messages
  - Decentering

- **Look:** Listen With Your Eyes

- **Listen:** Understand Details and Ideas
  - Identify your listening goal
  - Mentally summarize the details
  - Link Message details with major idea
  - Practice
  - Transform barriers into goals
Faulty Listening Behaviors (CONT’D)

- **Ambushing**: using listening skills to collect information to use for an attack on the speaker

- **Insulated listening**: avoiding a particular topic

- **Insensitive listening**: unable to look beyond words for other meanings

- **Stage hogging**: attempting to turn the conversation to oneself
THE SPEECH COMMUNICATION PROCESS

- Speaker - speech communication starts here
- Message - whatever is communicated
- Channel – means by which a message is communicated
- Listener – the receiver of the communicated message
- Feedback – comes in many forms and must be understood
- Interference - anything impeding the communication of the message
- Situation – the time and place of occurrence
THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING AND SPEAKING IN COMMUNICATION

- In order to communicate effectively we have to be able to hear what the other person is saying.

- Do not daydream in a conversation but instead concentrate fully on what the other person is saying.

- Communicate through speech

- Learn to present our thoughts and feelings meaningfully to avoid miscommunication

- Develop leadership skills

- Learn to be a more sensitive communicator
PUBLIC SPEAKING

“Talk is cheap”

- Not anymore, a well organized, thoughtful talk makes many people a very lucrative wage
  - Henry Kissinger
  - Barbara Walters
  - Colin Powell
SIMILARITIES BETWEEN PUBLIC SPEAKING AND CONVERSATION

- Organize your thoughts
  - Giving someone directions to your house

- Tailor your message to the audience
  - Your 5 year old asks you where babies come from
  - Your 14 year old asks you where babies come from
  - Your 22 year old asks the same question

- Telling a story for maximum impact
  - Don’t tell the “punch line” of a story first

- Adapting to listener feedback
  - Watch for non-verbal feedback – looks of confusion, looks of pain or hurtfulness
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PUBLIC SPEAKING (PS) AND CONVERSATION

- PS is more structured
  - Usually time limited
  - Questions not allowed to interrupt the speech, usually left for at the end (time permitting)

- PS requires more formal language
  - No slang, jargon or bad grammar
  - Speeches should be something special so that they qualify as life events and are remembered

- PS requires a different method for delivery
  - More formal delivery
    - No vocalized pauses – “uh”, “ah”, “um”
    - Don’t use stock phrases repeatedly – “you know”, “basically”, “I mean”
**Speaking Skills (Public Speaking)**

- Know the needs of your audience and match your contents to their needs.

- Body language is important.
  - Standing, walking or moving about with appropriate hand gesture or facial expression.

- Speak with conviction as if you really believe in what you are saying.

- Maintain sincere eye contact with the audience.