Well hello to thee! Thanks for downloading my eBook on Listening. Quite an obscure topic for a book you may say, but I think it’s one of the key areas of communication that doesn’t get the attention it deserves.

Over time, I’ve realised that both good listening and bad listening have an incredible impact on others. I’d love to inspire you deeper into the ‘good listener‘ camp.

This book outlines 30 Listening Skills and is designed as a collection of little thoughts you can digest each day. It’s a taster of a larger piece of work on listening and communication I am exploring, and can’t wait to tell you about. I hope this content gives you some room for thought.

Enjoy the read. Tweet the quotes & come say hello. It makes my day to get feedback; good or bad... I’m all ears.

So.....go get stuck in. Ba boom!
Table Of Contents

#1  Eyeball to Eyeball
#2  Ask Good Questions
#3  You Don’t Know Exactly What They Mean
#4  Two Ears One Mouth
#5  Turn Your Phone Off
#6  Have Open Body Language
#7  Be Approachable And Non Judgemental
#8  Listen In A Good Environment
#9  Confidentiality
#10 Have Good Motivations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>Don’t Ask If You Don’t Want To Know?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#12</td>
<td>Note Down Points Made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#13</td>
<td>Recognise Your Power Footprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#14</td>
<td>Put Down What You’re Doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#15</td>
<td>Understand Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#16</td>
<td>Be A Business That Listens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#17</td>
<td>Put Yourself In Their Shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#18</td>
<td>Analyse the Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#19</td>
<td>Have Boundaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#20</td>
<td>Understand The Different Types Of Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#21</td>
<td>Social Media Listening Tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#22</td>
<td>Don’t Look For Symptoms, Go To The Roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#23</td>
<td>Seasonal Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#24</td>
<td>You’re Not Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#25</td>
<td>Don’t Fix. Listen And Hear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#26</td>
<td>Listen To Your Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#27</td>
<td>Revolutionaries Can Become Dictators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#28</td>
<td>Filtered Listening Has Dangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#29</td>
<td>Get Off Script</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#30</td>
<td>Remember The Stories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Eyeball To Eyeball.**

If you’re going to spend time listening to someone, be fully present.

Stop. Make Eye Contact. Enjoy the merry dance of ideas sparking and the vulnerability of eyes connecting.

People do notice if you look over their shoulder or at your phone. They don’t think you’re important. They just think you’re selfish, insecure or too self important.
"Just because I didn’t do what you told me, doesn’t mean I wasn’t listening to you!"

HANK KETCHAM

calebstorkey.com
Ask Good Questions.

If you want a good answer ask a good question.

Good questions unlock thinking and invite deeper reflection. And after you’ve asked the first, ask the follow up that takes you deeper.

A skilled questioner doesn’t grow bored or waste their time listening to froth; they find treasure.

If you’re stuck in boring conversations you’re either with boring people or you’re asking boring questions.
There is no such thing as a worthless conversation, provided you know what to listen for. Questions are the breath of life for a conversation.

JAMES MILLER
You Don’t Know Exactly What They Mean.

However close the similarities in experience, you cannot know ‘exactly what they mean.’

By jumping in you bring attention back to yourself, alienate others and cut across their vulnerability.

Empathise and share suitable experiences with them. If in doubt, share those experiences that are motivated to be helpful to THEM as opposed to making yourself look good.

Ask questions and allow space for them to SAY….. ‘Exactly What They Mean.’
I would say that listening to the other person's emotions may be the most important thing I've learned in twenty years of business.

HEATH HERBER
Two Ears One Mouth.

You’d look like a freak if you had two mouths and one ear, yet your happy to sound like a freak.

Or maybe you think your voice sounds good? It does. Very good. But in moderation.

Try listening double the time you talk.

More meek, less freak.
Who speaks, sows; Who listens, reaps.

ARGENTINE PROVERB
Turn Your Phone Off.

Everyone’s time is valuable.

Taking calls in meetings dismisses the value of others time, shows disrespect and makes you look like a chump.

When a phone rings, asking them: ‘Do you mind if I get this’ obliges them to say ‘Yes.’

Turn off your phone. Turn it upside down. Or better still, sit on it.

The world won’t end. If you’re truly leading your army into battle and your underperforming generals are lost without you; after you’ve realised you need to train your troops better, request flexibility for phone checking when you arrive. Don’t go AWOL mid-sentence.

And finally, if you’re in a group and at a restaurant, have everyone throw their phone in the middle. The first to pick up their phone mid meal, gets the bill. Cheque for your phone.
You cannot truly listen to anyone and do anything else at the same time.

M. SCOTT PECK
Have Open Body Language.

Are you aware what you’re body is communicating when you’re listening?

Yeah yeah, I know you know to un-cross your arms, look into their eyes and lean forward.

And yes, you’ve learnt the basics of NLP.

Communicating through our bodies comes from connection. Connection comes from understanding. Understanding comes from empathy. Empathy is either there, or it requires choice.

Chose to listen with your body.

Yes to NLP. Never Lose Passion and Never Listen Passively.
Effective questioning brings insight, which fuels curiosity, which cultivates wisdom.

CHIP BELL
Be Approachable And Non Judgemental.

People share when they feel safe & secure. (Or when they’re caught or in court).

Reduce the sharing friction.

Ask. Care. Don’t Judge.

And under no circumstances over-react. Not if you want them to share next time.

Without Grace, Truth isn’t shared.
One friend, one person who is truly understanding, who takes the trouble to listen to us as we consider a problem, can change our whole outlook on the world.

TWEET THIS QUOTE

DR E. H. MAYO
Listen In A Good Environment.

Some environments are more conducive to good conversations.

The wheels on the bus go round and round, but it helps to be able to hear.

Some venues are so noisy that’s it’s pointless attempting a good chat.

Drink or eat. Walk or sit. Different locations work better for different people but when possible remove others from distractions.

Good environment, good conversations.

They don’t call them campfire chats for nothing.
A good listener is not only popular everywhere, but after a while he gets to know something.

WILSON MIZNER
Confidentiality.

The clue in ‘Please don’t tell anyone’ is the word ‘anyone.’

It does include people who may find it ‘interesting’, ‘helpful’ or those you’re wishing to impress.

The sharer who senses you’ve told others won’t share again.

Those who hear you’ve broken confidence won’t trust you.

And those you impress are not worth impressing. They’re full of life’s problems, will talk about you beyond your back, and drag you down to the gutter of gossip. Happy days.

Be wise about what you share with whom. Some people aren’t gossips. They simply can’t cope with the pressure of knowing ‘burdensome’ information and need to share it on. Don’t give them yours unless you want it to be others.
The best way to understand people is to listen to them.

RALPH NICHOLS
Have Good Motivations.

Are you asking questions because you care?

Or will you ‘benefit’ by knowing the answer?

Resist the temptation to violate trust and enter into listening with wholehearted motivations.

Motivations are often mixed, but if you know you may do harm with the knowledge, don’t request it.

Let your words bring good. Let your focus be love.
The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood.

RALPH NICHOLS
Don’t Ask ‘How Are You’ If You Don’t Want To Know?

Admit it; you don’t really care when you ask ‘How Are You?’

Then don’t ask.

If they want to share and you don’t want to listen it’s a bad experience for both.

If you want them to share but have previously asked absentmindedly, this time they won’t believe your interest.

Narrow the ‘asking’ focus down to the level you’re prepared to engage.

Perhaps not ‘how are you?’ but ‘how was your drive over?’

And engage wholeheartedly at whatever level you pitch it.
There's a big difference between showing interest and really taking interest.

MICHAEL P. NICHOLS
Note Down Points Made.

You don’t need to write down points about your friends partner, during a big heart to heart.

But not taking notes in business settings is foolish.

When it requires an action point, further thinking, or to be followed up- don’t leave it to chance that you’ll remember.

Lots of people don’t.

Establish a methodology for your note-taking to help you listen well.
To say that a person feels listened to means a lot more than just their ideas get heard. It's a sign of respect. It makes people feel valued.

DEBORAH TANNEN
Recognise Your Power Footprint.

Do you know how much your presence and shadow impacts people?

Give away power.

Don’t Lord it over others.

The impact that you have on someone else can be releasing or controlling, life giving or crushing.

The impact goes beyond the initial conversation.

Leave good footprints behind you. You never know who’s following in them. Listening and valuing someone ahead of you, always reduces your power footprint.
Man's inability to communicate is a result of his failure to listen effectively.

CARL ROGERS
**Put Down What You’re Doing.**

Multi-tasking is over-rated, especially when those that pay the cost are those receiving your poor attention.

Determine two things: the type of activity and the type of conversation.

Some activities pair well: Washing up and chats about plans for the week. Some not so well. Writing a book and a conversation about your friends marriage breakdown.

If in doubt, put it down.

They’ll always be more tasks; there wont always be more moments.
I’ll defend to the death your right to say that, but I never said I’d listen to it!

TOM GALLOWAY
Understand Expectations Of Time Spent Together.

Is the purpose of the time together clear?

It’s often unstated.

Are you both on the same song sheet?

Is it phone off time? Strategic planning? Pillow talk?

Clear expectations prevents missed expectations.

Stroking faces when talking may be pleasant but is not always a required must when listening to your business partner.
You have to be willing sometimes to listen to some remarkable bad opinions. Because if you say to someone, 'That's the silliest thing I've ever heard; get on out of here!'—then you'll never get anything out of that person again, and you might as well have a puppet on a string or a robot.

JOHN BRYAN
Be A Business That Listens.

Businesses that don’t listen, don’t learn, don’t love, and don’t last.

Listen to your team, clients, customers, stakeholders and the public.

When running a business, the threat isn’t what you hear; it’s what you don’t hear.
Be a good listener. Your ears will never get you in trouble.

FRANK TYGER
Put Yourself In Their Shoes.

Otherwise known as empathy.

What do they need? What’s their situation? How can you help?

If it’s possible to consistently create win wins, you’ll become a good magnet to others.

Do you have the opportunity to make their day? Do it.

Can they make yours?

Let them know when you’ve earnt the right.
Seek first to understand, then to be understood.

STEFHAN COVEY
Analyse the Data.

There’s always data. What’s it telling you?

Work out what data you need to be collecting and create stories and actions from them.

There’s no point flying blind hoping what you’re doing is taking you in the direction you want, when you could determine best strategies with planning, collecting and analysing.

How does this relate to listening?

Do words or reactions you express create a constant specific reaction? No excuses for not collecting that data. Enhance or eliminate your communication accordingly.
Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand.

KARL MENNINGER
Have Boundaries.

You can’t listen forever.

You wont want to listen forever.

Some people are plain boring, wrapped up in their own world and unable to pick up on social cues. They love to talk about themselves again and again and again.

Create boundaries when you need.

This could be the need to be clear up front as to the time you have, or if the context is applicable what needs to be discussed.

Don’t be afraid to excuse yourself. It’s not always helpful for someone to unload. To them or you.
Bore, n.: A person who talks when you wish him to listen.

AMBROSE BIERCE
Understand The Different Types Of Listening.

If you don’t understand the different types of listening, then learn them.

It’s more than knowing passive, pretend, projective, attentive, active, empathic and facilitative listening.

It’s understanding the context around the listening.

Without context, listening models are forced and formulaic.

But by learning the foundations, you can accelerate your learning. You don’t become a Jedi Master by always freestyling it.
The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU
Social Media Listening Tools.

Now that your organisation loves to listen, fill your tool belt.

Choose the right kit for the right job.

If you’re building an apartment block, you’d need different tools from doing a DIY project.

Everyone should listen.

Know the topics to listen into, have something helpful to say, communicate well, understand important conversations, assess data, and establish action plans.

It may cost a few bob to have some ears, but we all know how invaluable they are.
We listened to what our customers wanted and acted on what they said. Good things happen when you pay attention.

JOHN F SMITH
Don’t Look For Symptoms, Go To The Roots.

Most of our attention is drawn to the leaves but we often miss the roots.

People live in the moment and communicate about the moment.

This can be great, but sometimes it’s a complete disaster.

Don’t waste energy and time on the symptoms if you’re looking for transformation.

Pull up the bad roots, prune the rotten branches and watch the tree bear fruit.

Snapping off a few leaves here or there, only works when the tree is healthy.
A good listener tries to understand what the other person is saying. In the end he may disagree sharply, but because he disagrees, he wants to know exactly what it is he is disagreeing with.

KENNETH A. WELLS
Seasonal Listening.

We all go through the seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter.

Someone may be in Winter and you may be in Summer.

The skilled listener know’s their own season, the others season and how to tread sensitively.

They may be delighted that you’ve got another promotion, but will find it easier to celebrate if you’re sensitive to the business that’s falling around their ankles.
Wisdom is the reward for a lifetime of listening, when you'd have preferred to talk.

D. J. Kaufman
You’re Not Me.

If I were you, I’d not say ‘If I were you.’

Because you’re not. You’re you.

Don’t project your circumstances and answers into somebody life.

That’s lazy listening.

A good approach is only a good approach when it’s the right approach for the right person.
The best time to hold your tongue is the time you feel you must say something or bust.  

JOSH BILLINGS
Don’t Fix. Listen And Hear.

Sometimes sharing is enough.

To be listened to. To be heard. To be understood.

And even if you don’t fully understand, attempting to understand shows kindness.

A truthful ‘I hear you’ acknowledges the importance of someone’s thoughts and voice.

The human body has an uncanny ability to heal itself, as does the human mind.

If only we’d allow the space for people to arrive at revelation without trying to fix them all the time.
“Many attempts to communicate are nullified by saying too much.”

ROBERT GREENLEAF
Listen To Your Body.

Your body has a lot to share.

What’s it telling you?

It’s not good enough to listen to others if you don’t listen to yourself.

You won’t have much of an ability to give to others if you neglect what you need.

And if your physical body is needing to speak, chances are you’ve silenced its voice.

Rest or Push?

What says your body?
Listening looks easy, but it's not simple. Every head is a world.

CUBAN PROVERB
Revolutionaries Can Become Dictators.

Successful people were once voiceless.

Vulnerable & Timid.

Don’t ever lose sight of your frailty and don’t think you’re more important than others.

Beware of the structures of efficiency and success that replace love and kindness.

Beware of the lure of self importance and ego that puts you on a level that is unhealthy for your soul.

You can’t outsource being a good listener, when you need to listen.

Don’t let impatience and tyranny take over.
Big egos have little ears.

ROBERT SCHULLER
Filtered Listening Has Dangers.

Getting someone to listen on your behalf is dangerous.

People filter what’s in their interest to filter.

If you’re not aware of their biases and they’re not aware of what you really need to know, you can end up hearing what they want you to hear.

Many a problem has come from filtered listening.
It’s a rare person who wants to hear what he doesn’t want to hear.

DICK CAVETT
Get Off Script.

‘If money was no object, what product would you recommend.’
‘Well there’s a great deal on this product. It’s alright, and it’s cheap this week as it’s half price. Do you want to have a look?’
‘You suck.’

Get off script. And listen to what people really say.
"No man ever listened himself out of a job."

CALVIN COOLIDGE
Remember The Stories.

Everyone loves a good story, so gift others, by being a great story teller.

It’s not serendipity that some people can hold the room and others can’t.

The ones who can, have had more practice and built up their confidence in doing so. Make that person you.

Create a library of tales, tagging stories for different occasions.

People remember what connects with them emotionally, or what relates to them.

Read your stories, practice them, perform them and deliver the endings with aplomb.

And always be on the look out for more stories to add to your storybook.
It is the province of knowledge to speak.
And it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.

TWEET THIS QUOTE

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
Copyright

This eBook is the copyright of Caleb Storkey. I want to find the right balance to allow you to re-publish and re-distribute the material, yet at the same time protect my intellectual property. To download the eBook for free please visit calebstorkey.com/listening-skills-ebook. You are welcome to re-distribute and re-publish up to 5 individual slides showing images and text as long as you include this copyright notice: © 2013, Caleb Storkey. All rights reserved. Originally published at www.calebstorkey.com/listening-skills-ebook. Please refer to my permissions page calebstorkey.com/permissions for further information. The creators and owners of each photograph are referenced on the photo, and these images are used under a Creative Commons Licence.