

# The Importance of Listening and Mindfulness in Communicating Effectively

Amira Adams  
Alverno College

## Listening and Mindfulness Importance in Communicating Effectively

Listening and Mindfulness are extremely important in relation to communicating effectively. Communication is a part of our everyday lives. Having to relay messages and interpret what others are saying, doing, or thinking is something that we can not escape. Life revolves around people actually working together and learning how to navigate the needs of everyone. When communicating we have to be mindful of what we say, how we say it and how the other individual is interpreting it, in order to ensure the message is not only received but understood. Listening is also a major part of communication because in order to fully and intentionally understand someone, you have to listen to what they are saying first. Listening and Mindfulness are not easy but it is a way to learn. When in a profession like Chief of communication all the way to a beginner level communication position, it takes those soft skills to be able to be successful within the company you are working for.

It is important to know that there are many different types of people that you will encounter in the workplace. Mastering the art of mindfully communicating and listening will help with the different types of personalities that will cross your path. All while learning how important Listening and mindfulness is in communicating effectively for others it is also important to use these tools for your own benefit and understanding. Having that sense of self awareness will boost your confidence when speaking to others and knowing that you have something valuable to contribute to the conversation. This will not only enhance your conversation skills but add a sense of value and worth to your encounters with others.

## Listening and Mindfulness Importance in Communicating Effectively

While researching more in depth, There are specific steps that help ensure that you are mindful when communicating. According to (*Mindful Communication*2020), “These principles include setting an intention, being fully present, remaining open and non-judgmental, and relating to others with compassion. In essence, mindful communication is about bringing a greater level of awareness to the two major components of communication: listening and speaking.” I find this to be extremely important because it exclusively states how mindfulness can help with remaining open and non judgemental when having a conversation with someone. Once judgment is involved, it blurs the conversation and it then blocks the line for open, honest, and effective communication. In order to increase effective communication, mindfulness tools like being intentional and compassionate allow for the conversation to remain open.

According to (Melinda Fouts, 2018) “When it comes to mindful communication, we are aware of the choices we are making and of our thinking and reasoning.” Also with effective communication being able to listen, reason, and thoughtfully make decisions based on the information is what makes mindful communication and listening worthwhile. In order to continue to be mindful and listen for communication it is important to hold yourself accountable. Especially when in the workplace, the only person that is in charge of holding you accountable is yourself when communicating.

Another way of being Mindful in order to effectively communicate is through a method mentioned in the book by Mark Goulston named “ Just Listen.” The method named “The Stipulation Gambit” (Goulston, 2015) truly introduced a way to mindfully communicate while holding yourself accountable. The Stipulation Gambit is when you communicate your shortcomings or possible weak points before you begin to further your conversation or

explanation with someone else. This further helps effective communication because you are going out of your way to put everything on the table and also be confident within yourself. A part of effectively communicating is giving all of the information that needs to be provided so everyone can be on the same page.

“As much as effective listening can help you become more effective in your interpersonal relationships” (MAMcIntosh, 2018). This goes to show that Listening plays just as much of a role in other mindfulness tactics. Listening helps truly navigate conversations and actually be able to provide much more insight that you may have already had. Having and nurturing these interpersonal skills and relationships help create a space for mindfulness.

Listening in order to maintain effective communication is basically absorbing the information for your own understanding. It is the ability of being selfish in order to be selfless while communicating. Effective listening can be difficult to do in the beginning because we are so used to listening to respond or to get our own thoughts and plans across. When listening intentionally to the other person it is important to show not only that you care but that you truly understand. Showing these gestures give the other person the reason to believe that you actually care, allowing them to open up even more.

Listening also grants us access to a whole new world. When we mindfully listen we gain more understanding and it allows us to eliminate excess confusion. In the book, *The Zen of Listening*, It states that “Listening is the skill we need to take seriously in this age of distraction, no matter what occupation, creed, or culture. Mindful listening can bring about unexpected discoveries, make visible the invisible, and change us in profound ways.” (Shafir, 2006) I found this quote to be so profound and important. Understanding that being mindful and intentionally

## Listening and Mindfulness Importance in Communicating Effectively

listening is so much more than what we do and what we see in the moment but what is surrounding us that we can't visibly see.

Reflecting on the importance of Mindfulness and Listening intentionally for effective communication reminds me to not forget reflection when listening. Tools like being able to repeat back what the speaker said, Acknowledging that you hear and understand someone and finding a way to slow down the conversation and go at your own pace is also a way to incorporate mindfulness. Knowing when to pay close attention to detail and not rushing through conversations while taking in information and processing without immediately responding is the embodiment of mindfulness in effective communication.

Having the desire to go in the field of Communication and DEI takes a lot of conversation and talking with people who may disagree with me or have a different communication style in general. Having the ability to use these techniques in the workplace will allow me to know when to take a deep breath and listen intentionally to what the other person is trying to convey. The article *Mindful Listening*, reminded me that "Listening is the other half of the communication equation." (Hall, 2017). Mindfulness and mindful listening are the main factors in being able to communicate effectively.

**Sources:**

Assessments, S. (2020, November 27). *Mindful Communication*. SIGMA Assessment Systems. <https://www.sigmaassessmentssystem.com/mindful-communication/>.

Goulston, M. (2015). *Just Listen*. AMACOM.

Hall, E. D. (2017, March 31). *Mindful Listening*. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/conscious-communication/201703/mindful-listening>.

MAMcIntosh, . (2018, January 14). *The Importance of Listening in Effective Communication*. Brewminate. <https://brewminate.com/the-importance-of-listening-in-effective-communication/>.

Melinda Fouts, P. D. (2018, June 5). *Council Post: How To Become More Mindful Of Your Communication*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/06/05/how-to-become-more-mindful-of-your-communication/?sh=78e509461460>.

Shafir, R. Z. (2006). In *The Zen of Listening*. essay, Quest Books.