

The 6 Levels of Listening

Level	Activity of listener	Effect on person being listened to:
1	Listening to 'argue' Making judgements about what the other person is saying, the listener is thinking, "do I agree or disagree with what this person is saying." The listener is getting ready to interrupt and put their views across!	Doesn't feel listened to and doesn't feel heard or understood - and possibly might even feel undermined.
2	Listening to 'think about your next question' Not really listening to what the person is saying. The listener is thinking, "what question should I ask next." The listener is thinking about the correct 'formula' they should be following.	Doesn't feel listened to and doesn't feel heard or understood – and possibly might feel the listener is following some sort of training manual!
3	Listening to 'demonstrate you are listening' Using eye contact and positive body language to demonstrate you are a good listener. The listeners desire to 'look like a good listener' is distracting them from effective listening.	Starting to feel that the listener is interested in what is being said – but this feeling will quickly disappear if there is no evidence that the listener has really heard and understood what was said.
4	Listening 'actively' Using eye contact, positive body language and accurately reflecting back what the other person is saying.	Feels listened to and understood – feeling that the listener is genuinely interested in what is being said.
5	Listening to 'understand' Using eye contact, positive body language and accurately reflecting back what the other person is saying. Mirroring and matching their body language, matching their metaphors and representational systems.	Feels very understood, feels that the listener is interested in what is being said and 'gets them' and what it's like to be in their position.
6	Listening to 'help the speaker to understand themselves' Using eye contact, positive body language and accurately reflecting back what the other person is saying. Mirroring and matching their body language, matching their metaphors and representational systems – plus using your own self-awareness and intuition to connect more fully with what the person has said and to accurately reflect thoughts, feelings and observations.	The enhanced quality and clarity of thinking that is generated creates significant insights and 'light-bulb' moments. Feelings of being listened to and understood at a very deep level.