

Appendix A

Listening Self-Assessment

Choose one response for each of the items below. Base your choice on what you usually do, not on what you think you should do.

1. When you are at lunch with a friend, you:
 - a. Focus your attention on the menu and then on the service provided.
 - b. Ask about events in your friend's life and pay attention to what's said.
 - c. Exchange summaries of what is happening to each of you while focusing attention on the meal.
2. When someone talks nonstop, you:
 - a. Ask questions at an appropriate time in an attempt to help the person focus on the issue.
 - b. Make an excuse to end the conversation.
 - c. Try to be patient and understand what you are being told.
3. If a group member complains about a fellow employee who, you believe, is disrupting the group, you:
 - a. Pay attention and withhold your opinions.
 - b. Share your own experiences and feelings about that employee.
 - c. Acknowledge the group member's feelings and ask the group member what options he/she has.
4. If someone is critical of you, you:
 - a. Try not to react or get upset.
 - b. Automatically become curious and attempt to learn more.
 - c. Listen attentively and then back up your position.
5. You are having a very busy day and someone tells you to change the way you are completing a task. You believe the person is wrong, so you:
 - a. Thank him/her for the input and keep doing what you were doing.
 - b. Try to find out why he/she thinks you should change.
 - c. Acknowledge that the other may be right, tell him/her you are very busy and agree to follow up later.
6. When you are ready to respond to someone else, you:
 - a. Sometimes will interrupt the person if you believe it is necessary.
 - b. Almost always speak before the other is completely finished talking.
 - c. Rarely offer your response until you believe the other has finished.
7. After a big argument with someone you have to work with every day, you:
 - a. Settle yourself and then try to understand the other's point of view before stating your side again.
 - b. Just try to go forward and let bygones be bygones.
 - c. Continue to press your position.
8. A colleague calls to tell you that he is upset about getting assigned to a new job. You decide to:
 - a. Ask him if he can think of options to help him deal with the situation.
 - b. Assure him that he is good at what he does and that these things have a way of working out for the best.
 - c. Let him know you heard how badly he feels.

9. If a friend always complains about her problems but never asks about yours, you:
 - a. Try to identify areas of common interest.
 - b. Remain understanding and attentive, even if it becomes tedious.
 - c. Support her complaints and mention your own complaints.

10. The best way to remain calm in an argument is to:
 - a. Continue to repeat your position in a firm but even manner.
 - b. Repeat what you believe is the other person's position.
 - c. Tell the other person that you are willing to discuss the matter again when you are both calmer.

Score each item of your Listening Self-Assessment.

1. a) 0 b) 10 c) 5
2. a) 10 b) 0 c) 5
3. a) 5 b) 0 c) 5
4. a) 5 b) 10 c) 0
5. a) 0 b) 10 c) 5
6. a) 5 b) 0 c) 10
7. a) 10 b) 5 c) 0
8. a) 5 b) 5 c) 10
9. a) 0 b) 10 c) 5
10. a) 0 b) 10 c) 5

Add up your total score.

- 80-100 **You are an active, excellent listener.** You achieve good balance between listening and asking questions, and you strive to understand others.
- 50-75 **You are an adequate-to-good listener.** You listen well, although you may sometimes react too quickly to others before they are finished speaking.
- 25-45 **You have some listening skills but need to improve them.** You may often become impatient when trying to listen to others, hoping they will finish talking so you can talk.
- 0-20 **You listen to others very infrequently.** You may prefer to do all of the talking and experience extreme frustration while waiting for others to make their point.

From: *Managers As Facilitators: A Practical Guide to Getting Work Done in a Changing Workplace*, by Richard G. Weaver and John D. Farrell, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., San Francisco CA, 1999.

