

SYP Tool: Listen

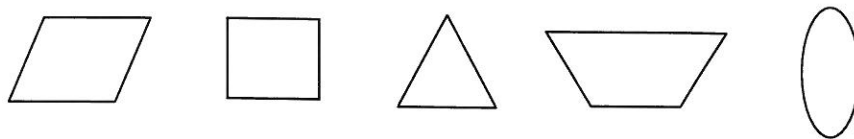
Title: Listening Challenge

Objective: To provide participants with an experience of a communication process that will highlight the elements of effective communication.

Materials: Paper, pens, flipchart/whiteboard

Set-Up: This is a good and fun activity to introduce the importance of active listening. Participants are given the task of replicating a drawing. One person is the drawer (listener) and cannot look at the drawing. The other person is the speaker. They can look at the drawing, but are unable to review the work of the listener.

Activity: 1. Draw a geometric picture on a piece of paper. Example:



2. Pair up participants. One person will be the “listener” and one will be the “speaker”. Give each participant a piece of paper. Have the participants sit back to back and specify that there will be no talking.

3. The “listener” will be the first to draw. The “speaker” faces the image that is drawn on a flipchart or whiteboard. Both partners need to work together to recreate the image that is on the flipchart/whiteboard. They need to follow a few communication rules:

- Only the speaker can speak.
- The listener may not ask questions for clarification.
- The speaker may not ask anything of the listener

4. Facilitators: Give the pairs 5-6 minutes to complete the drawing. As they are working, observe what they do/say so that you can use specific examples in the debrief discussion. When they are done with their picture, they can compare their finished work to the image.

5. Debrief with the Listener role first:

- What was it like to be the drawer?
- How did the communication rules impact you? Your goal?
- What was frustrating about this experience?
- What does this experience tell you about effective listening?

6. Repeat the same questions with the Speaker role. **(Main point: listening requires actively asking questions to clarify and saying things that let the speaker know that you understand.)**

7. Repeat the exercise with a different picture and have the participants switch roles. This time, speaking is allowed. The “listener” can ask questions and the “speaker” can talk as well. (The facilitator should let them do the exercise. Monitor their work.)

8. Debrief:

- How many of you were able to recreate the picture?
- What made this exercise easier? Difficult?
- What lessons can this exercise teach us about listening and effective communication?