



# Linea Insights

Two Ears

One Mouth

There is a saying that we have two ears and one mouth for a reason, we should therefore listen more than we speak. The reality however is that this most basic guidance often isn't heeded in our personal or professional lives. Unfortunately in a society of continuous messages and 24 hour media via various sources, we are all struggling to be heard and focused on trying to get our message across.

Effective change is predicated on active and focused listening. People want to be listened to and in doing so it is surprising how much knowledge can be gained, the relationships built and the rapport developed.

Even when we think we are listening, we often aren't. We all adopt different listening and personality styles, based on the situation, subject, and relationship. The reality is that these listening styles prevent us gaining a deep understanding from the conversation and in some situations can actually cause relationships to breakdown.



## Which listening style do you adopt:

### 1. Pseudo Listening

Appearing attentive in conversation, while actually ignoring or only partially listening to the other speaker. The intent of pseudo-listening is not to listen, but cater to some other personal need of the listener.

### 2. Stage Hog

Interested in expressing their own ideas, rather than listening to what others have to say on the subject. Stage hogs do not listen to the other person, but give short speeches.

### 3. Selective Listening

Listening only to the parts of a message that interest them and reject or ignore everything else. Selective listeners have their own agenda of interesting and valuable topics and disregard or are disinterested in others' agendas.

### 4. Filling the Gaps

Think that what they have heard actually makes a whole, coherent story, even when it may not. They manufacture information to fill in the gaps of incomplete information, distorting the intended message.

### 5. Assimilation to Prior Messages

Interpret messages in terms of similar messages remembered from the past. Push, pull, chop, and squeeze messages in order to make sure that they are consistent with prior messages.

### 6. Insulated Listening

Actively avoid or ignore certain topics. When that topic arises in the conversation, they turn off.

### 7. Defensive Listening

Take innocent comments as personal attacks, creating a perception of insecurity and lack of confidence.

## 8. Ambush Listening

Listen very carefully to collect information that can be used against the other person. They are constantly seeking to ambush and trap the other person in their own ideas and words, usually to prove or support a strong personal belief of their own. This approach causes others to be defensive.

## 9. Insensitive Listening

Not able to listen beyond face value of the other's words. These people rarely pick-up on hidden meanings or subtle nonverbal cues.

Next time you converse ask yourself am I really listening and see what truly actively listening, rather than passive listening can do for you.



## About the Author



A Business Improvement specialist with over 20 years' experience devising and leading complex Operational and Financial Turnaround, Transformation and Continuous Improvement Programmes.

With a background in Change Management, Lean Transformation, Financial & Commercial Management, Supply Chain / Procurement Optimisation and Programme Delivery gained within leading UK and International Public and Private sector organisations.

Ian possess an extensive track record of devising, managing and implementing comprehensive, multi-million pound, cross organisational transformation and continuous improvement programmes for NHS, Public and Private organisations and is an expert in delivering sustainable operational improvement and financial balance in challenging situations.

He received national recognition for collaborative programme delivery in the Government Efficiency Awards, was shortlisted as finalist in two further National Awards for NHS Transformation and achieved runner-up in the IFT Public Sector Turnaround Programme of the Year.

Ian holds an Honours degree in Business Management, is a Fellow at the Institute for Consulting, Fellow at the Institute for Operations Management, Fellow at the Chartered Management Institute, Fellow at the Institute of Logistics and Transport, Member of the Asia Transformation & Turnaround Association. Member of the Institute for Turnaround and committee member for the IFT North of England.

He has held numerous board and senior advisory positions, is a certified Lean Practitioner, Master Coach and a member of government and corporate turnaround panels.

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