Lecture 41
Listening and Interviewing

Lecture Outline:
- Apply the communication process to oral communication.
- Summarize the skills involved in being an effective listener.
- Identify nine common types of business interviews.

Facing a communication dilemma at Rockport:
Calling a meeting isn’t unusual; executives do it every day. Even so, few executives shut down an entire company to bring everyone to a meeting, but that’s exactly what Rockport president John Thorbeck decided to do. Rockport is a footwear subsidiary of Reebok, and except for the handful of people left behind to answer telephones in the company’s headquarters, all 350 managers and employees were asked to gather in a huge room for a two-day meeting.

Communicating Orally:
Rockport’s John Thorbeck knows that speaking and listening are the communication skills we use the most. Given a choice, people would rather talk to each other than write to each other. Talking takes less time and needs no composing, rewriting, retyping, duplicating, or distributing. By communicating with facial expressions, eye contact, tone of voice, gestures and posture, people can send subtle messages that add another dimension to the spoken words. Oral communication satisfies people’s need to be part of the human community and makes them feel good. Talking things over helps people in organizations build morale and establish a group identity.

When communicating orally, try to take advantage of the positive characteristics while minimizing the dangers. To achieve that goal, work on improving two key skills:
- Speaking
- Listening

Speaking:
Organize your thoughts in a logical way, decide on a style that suits the occasion, and edit your remarks mentally. As you speak, watch the other person, judging from verbal and nonverbal feedback whether your message is making the desired impression. If not, revise and try again. Just as various writing assignments call for different writing styles, various situations call for different speaking styles. Your speaking style depends on the level of intimacy between you and the other person and on the nature of your conversation. When you’re talking with a friend, you naturally speak more frankly than when you’re talking to your boss or a stranger. An important tool of oral communication, the telephone, can extend your reach across town and around the world.

However if your telephone skills are lacking, you may waste valuable time and appear rude. You can minimize your time on the telephone while raising your phone productivity by delivering one-way information by fax. Other ways of increasing your phone productivity by
- jotting down an agenda before making a call
- saving social chitchat for the end of a call
- saving up all the short calls you need to make to one person during a given day and simply making one longer call
- sending your message by fax, if you can’t reach someone by the phone
- making sure you’re your assistant has a list of people whose calls you’ll accept even if you’re in a meeting.
Listening:
If you’re typical, you spend over half your communication time listening. Listening supports effective relationships within the organization, enhances the organization’s delivery of products, alerts the organization to the innovations growing from both internal and external forces, and allows the organization to manage the growing diversity both in the workforce and in the customers it serves.

What happens when you listen:
- Sensing
- Interpreting
- Evaluating
- Remembering
- Responding

The three types of listening:
Various situations call for different listening skills. The three types of listening differ not only in purpose but also in the amount of feedback or interaction that occurs.
The goal of content listening is to understand and retain information imparted by a speaker. You may ask questions, but basically information flows from the speaker to you. Your job is to identify the key points for the message, so be sure to listen for clues to its structure:
- Previews
- Transitions
- Summaries
- Enumerated points

How to be a better listener:
Regardless of whether the situation calls for content, critical, or active listening, you can improve your listening ability by becoming more aware of the habits that distinguish good listeners from bad.
In addition, put nonverbal skills to work as you listen:
- Maintain eye contact
- React responsively with head nods or spoken signals
- Pay attention to the speaker’s body language
You might even test yourself from time to time: when someone is talking, ask yourself whether you’re actually listening to the speaker or mentally rehearsing how you’ll respond. Above all, try to be open to the information that will lead to higher-quality decisions, and try to accept the feeling that will build understanding and mutual respect.
If you do, you’ll be well on the way to becoming a good listener – an important quality when conducting business interviews.
Good and bad news listening

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>To listen effectively</th>
<th>The Bad Listener</th>
<th>The Good Listener</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Find areas of interest</td>
<td>Tunes out dry subjects</td>
<td>Opportunizes; ask “What’s in it for me”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Judge content, not delivery</td>
<td>Tunes out if delivery is poor</td>
<td>Judges content; skips over delivery error</td>
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<td>3. Hold your fire</td>
<td>Tends to enter into argument</td>
<td>Doesn’t judge until comprehension is complete; interrupts only</td>
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<td>4. Listen for ideas</td>
<td>Listens for facts</td>
<td>Listens for central themes</td>
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<td>5. Be flexible</td>
<td>Takes extensive notes using only one system</td>
<td>Takes fewer notes; uses four to five different systems, depending on the speaker.</td>
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<td>6. Work at listening</td>
<td>Shows no energy output; fakes attention</td>
<td>Works hard; exhibits active body state</td>
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<td>7. Resist distractions</td>
<td>Is distracted easily</td>
<td>Fights or avoids distractions; tolerates bad habits; knows how to concentrate</td>
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<td>8. Exercise your mind</td>
<td>Resists difficult expository material; seeks light, recreational material</td>
<td>Uses heavier material as exercise for the mind</td>
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<td>9. Keep your mind open</td>
<td>Reacts to emotional words</td>
<td>Interprets emotional words; does not get hung up on them</td>
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<td>10. Capitalize on the fact that thought is faster than speech</td>
<td>Tends to daydream with slow speakers</td>
<td>Challenges, anticipates, mentally summarizes</td>
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Conducting interviews on the job:
The conversation bounces back and forth from interviewer to interviewee. Although the interviewer guides the conversation, the interviewee may also seek to accomplish a purpose, perhaps to:
- obtain or provide information,
- solve a problem
- to create goodwill
- persuade the other person to take action.

Categorizing interviews:
- Job interviews
- Information interviews
- Persuasive interviews
- Exit interview
- Evaluation interview
- Counseling interviews
- Conflict-resolution interviews
- Disciplinary interviews
- Termination interviews