

## Improving Your Ear-Q

The following are recommended ways to build your listening skills.

- Take 51% of the responsibility for understanding what is being said.
- Look for areas of personal interest in what is being said.
- Plan to report the conversation back to someone else.
- Maintain the proper attitude. Keep an open mind.
- Stand or sit close to the speaker.
- Listen for the speaker's meaning.
- Identify the speaker's purpose by looking for central themes or ideas.
- Avoid becoming defensive.
- Limit and overcome distractions. Pay attention.
- Go to a lecture and just listen.
- Practice active listening skills: paraphrasing, clarifying, and giving feedback.
- Take notes on something you've heard.
- Commit yourself to better listening.

## Listening Exercises

**Exercise #1:** List 3 new skills you'd like to try to become a more effective listener.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Exercise #2:** Ask someone to tell you a 3 - 5 minute story. Use the three skills of active listening (paraphrasing, clarifying, and feedback) as well as the skills listed in "Improving Your Ear-Q." Ask the storyteller to rate you as a listener afterward.

**Scoring** – The score is based on the speaker's assessment of the 3 - 5 minute exchange.

**3** = Used the skill well

**2** = Made an effort to use the skill

**1** = Needs improvement

Paraphrasing: \_\_\_\_\_

Clarifying: \_\_\_\_\_

Feedback: \_\_\_\_\_