

Listening Stumbling Blocks

Which of the following stumbling blocks have tripped up your capacity to listen well to others? Circle at least three and share them with a partner. Share examples of when you had a tendency to get tripped up by these stumbling blocks.

ME TOO: Having the tendency to identify with what the speaker is saying, sometimes injecting an anecdote, turning the spotlight on oneself, and maybe not hearing what is actually being said.

DISTRACTOR: Having the tendency to change the subject or put down an idea before it is even fully expressed.

JUDGER: Having the tendency to listen with a critical ear and prejudge the merit of an idea perhaps dismissing it prematurely.

PREPARER: The tendency to rehearse what you want to say in response before the speaker has completed their thought and losing sight of the speaker's full message.

NITPICKER: Having the tendency to look for something to disagree with; pushback at; challenge or argue about often coming from the need to be precise and/or right.

FORTUNE TELLER: Having the tendency to think you know what someone is going to say before they say it and responding from that assumption.

SIFTER: Having the tendency to hear just what you want to hear and disregarding the other parts of the message.

PEACEKEEPER: Having the tendency to pretend to agree with others just to placate them or avoid confrontation.

DRIFTER: Having the tendency to get distracted when others are speaking by checking cell phone, email, looking at a passerby, daydreaming, looking away, from the speaker and so forth.

CONCLUDER: Having the tendency to complete a person's point for them rather than allowing them to finish their thought. [May interrupt with a different point or change the subject]

ARISTOCRAT: Having the tendency to assess another's speech, accent, costume, while they are talking, rather than listening to what they are saying.

OBLIVIOUS: The tendency to ignore signals like body language, emotions, stress, levels, and just attend to the surface level of the message missing the underlying nuance in the message

Questions for Exploration:

- What does listening have to do with the responses we get from other people?
- What is the role of listening in coaching?
- What might you be doing that prevents you from listening in ways that inform, empower, and inspire?
- What strategies can you employ to help yourself be a better listener?