

Three levels of listening
Module 2
Exercise 2.10

Level 1: Internal listening

Our attention is directed towards ourselves – that is, we are listening to the other person's words, but we are mainly concentrating on what they mean for us. The focus is really on me:

- My thoughts
- My opinion
- My feelings
- My conclusions about myself and others

In short, the important question is: what does it mean for me?

This is very appropriate in situations such as when:

- I'm travelling alone by plane to another city.
- I'm in a restaurant.

Level 1 provides us with information about ourselves and about what is happening around us. This is the level on which we try to find out things and understand them.

Participants are not coached/supervised on this level, because then they would focus too much on their own judgments and opinions. For example, 'Something like that happened to me, so don't worry about it. Let's focus first on the business plan.'

The coaching and supervision of participants take place on level 2.

Level 2: Focused listening

- You concentrate on the other person.
- You are focussed completely on the learning material.
- It's not about the coach/supervisor.
- The coach/supervisor records words, facial expressions and emotions, as well as everything that they convey.
- What are they saying? How are they saying it? What are they not saying?
- Then you decide what you want to react to and how you will react. You also listen to how the participant reacts to your response.
- The participant (speaker) feels the impact of listening.

Level of empathy, creativity, clarification, cooperation and innovation.

The coach/supervisor switches off his inner voice, his agenda, his thoughts, his opinions.

As a result, coaching/supervision takes place almost automatically.

Level 3: Universal listening

Level 3 covers everything that you can perceive with your senses: 360 degrees.

Everything that you see, hear, smell and feel, both the tangible and the emotional sensations.

Level 3 includes the action, the lack of action and the interaction.

Your intuition plays a major role on this level.