

Personal Listening Profile®

Individual Report



My Jewish Coach.com
Success without the Tsuris™

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Overview

Personal Listening Profile®

Research shows that people listen with a natural or preferred style. The purpose of the *Personal Listening Profile*® is to help you identify your preferred listening style and to develop an appreciation for other approaches that may be more effective in different situations. With this knowledge, you will be able to develop more effective communication strategies for a variety of environments.

The *Personal Listening Profile* identifies five approaches to listening. These approaches are important because they reflect the focus of our listening. These approaches are:

APPROACH	FOCUS
Appreciative	to relax and enjoy the listening experience
Empathic	to support and understand the emotions of the speaker
Discerning	to gather complete and accurate information
Comprehensive	to organize information and understand the meaning of the message
Evaluative	to critique information and make a decision

We all use a variety of different approaches depending on the situation, but research suggests that each of us tend to use some approaches more than others. That is, we have a natural **Listening Style** that is comprised of one or more different **Listening Approaches**. The listening style that we use determines both the quality of the information that we gather and the reaction of others to our behavior. And although our listening style is the one that comes most easily to us, experience tells us that we can adapt our current listening approach to the needs of almost any situation with appropriate insight and motivation.

- [Page 3](#) includes a narrative description of your most natural **Listening Style**, which will give you a picture of your natural approaches to listening.
- [Page 4](#) contains a **Listening Approaches Graph** which indicates how inclined you are to use each of the five listening approaches.
- [Page 5](#) describes your potential strengths and possible growth areas.
- [Page 6](#) discusses your expectations of others as listeners.
- [Pages 7 - 8](#) include your **Communication Gap Analysis**, an overview of how your strengths or limitations in each of the listening approaches relates to the intended message of the speaker.
- [Pages 9 -11](#) contain a personalized **Action Plan** which will help you determine positive next steps for developing strategies that work.
- [Pages 12 – 16](#) include a detailed overview of each of the five listening approaches.



COMPREHENSIVE ORIENTATION

Sarah, your most natural listening approach is **Comprehensive**. Furthermore, your responses suggest that this single approach is significantly more natural to you than any other approach. This indicates that as a listener your primary focus is on finding the underlying meaning within a message and organizing the ideas that are presented to you.

People with your listening approach naturally work to organize and make sense of the information that is presented to them. You are usually most attentive to “the big picture.” You may naturally seek to develop a framework within which you can organize details and less important ideas. You often listen most intensely at the beginning of an interaction. Once you comprehend a key idea, you are likely to relax, process the information, and expand even further upon it.

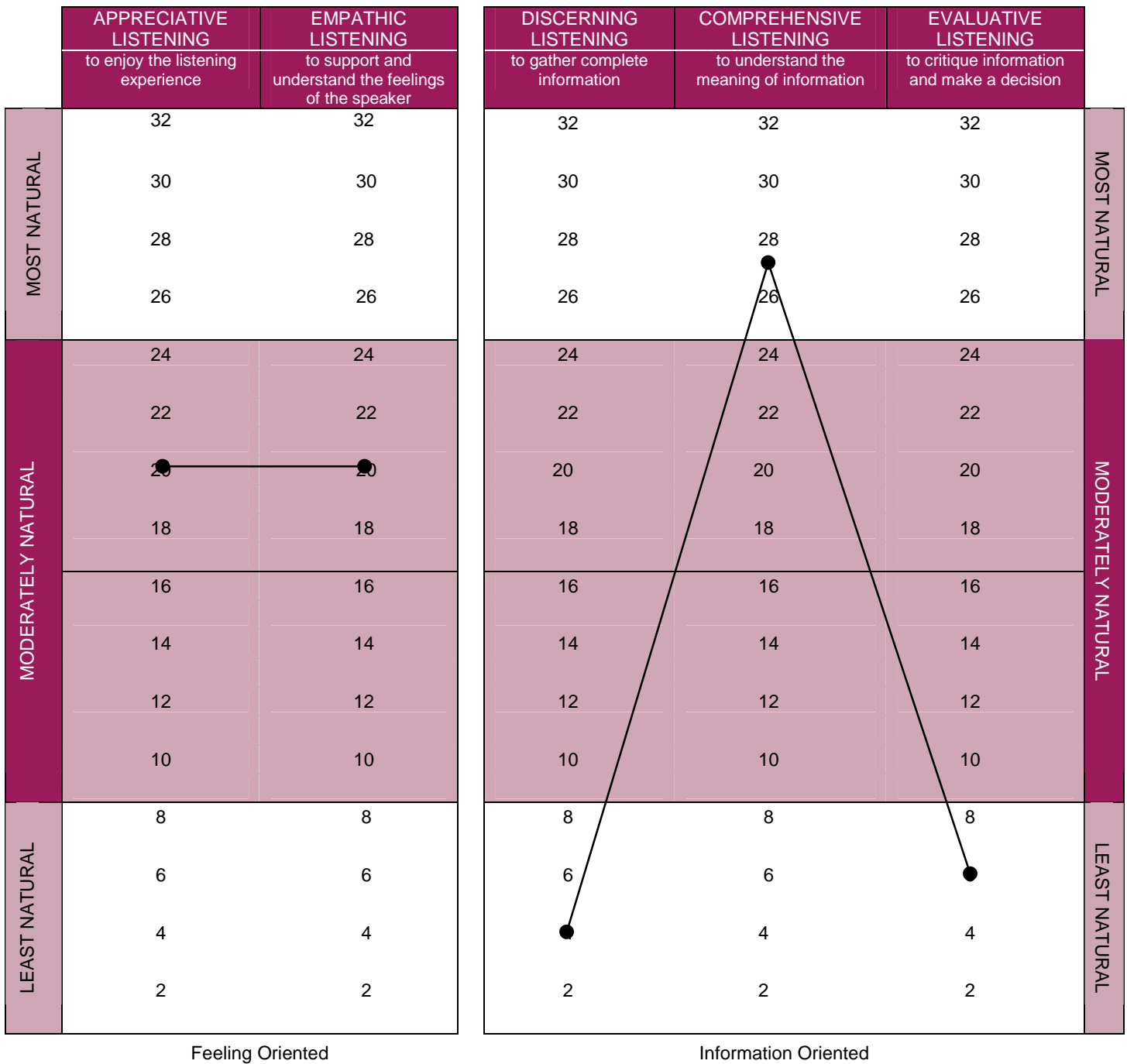
Ultimately, you probably want to make sense of the information and understand the underlying message, even if it is not stated directly. That is, you may look for “the message behind the message.” You probably want to understand the core relationships among ideas so that you can dive into those ideas and draw even deeper conclusions. You tend to think conceptually about the information you are receiving, and you can easily elaborate on the main ideas.

Comprehensive listening involves a mental process that is very active. Not only do you need to attend to incoming information, but also to information that is stored in long-term memory. As someone with this listening approach, you may seek to relate a new message to information, experiences, and observations from your past. You also may find yourself summarizing a message and putting it in your own words. You probably can often see information from several different angles. In addition, you may easily recognize when a person says one thing and means another. Further, you can frequently tell when someone doesn’t understand what has been said, and you may even be able to re-explain the message more clearly than the original speaker.



Your Listening Approaches Graph

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The Listening Approaches Graph above shows your scores on all five Listening Approaches. The height of your score represents how naturally you listen using a particular approach. Listening Approaches that are “most natural” for you are ones that you use automatically and without much conscious effort. Approaches that are “least natural” for you are ones that you are likely able to use, but require more deliberate effort on your part. As detailed on the following page, our patterns of listening tendencies tell us something about our strengths and growth areas as communicators.



Working with Your Listening Style

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Your Strengths as a Listener:

As mentioned earlier, one of the major strengths of your listening style is your instinct to understand the core of the information being communicated. As a consequence, you pick up on more than just the details and facts that are communicated. Most likely, you are able to identify the unspoken, deeper message that gives meaning to the surface message. With this deeper understanding usually comes the ability to elaborate on the ideas presented and recognize their implications. This type of elaborate processing is routinely associated with better, long-lasting memory.

Because of your listening style, you probably listen with the purpose of developing a framework within which to understand and organize the ideas presented. Consequently, you are able to integrate future information into this framework and understand it more thoroughly. In addition, because you are probably inclined to relate new material to your own experience, you may be adept at recognizing practical applications for that information.

Your Growth Areas as a Listener:

Your previous responses indicate that Discerning is one of your least natural approaches to listening. This may have some important consequences regarding the quality of information that you take away from a conversation or presentation. You may collect information that is either inaccurate or incomplete, or both. People who do not discern while listening often have records of an interaction that are too fragmented or disorganized to be useful. Further, you may be inclined to jump to conclusions before you have gathered all of the relevant information contained in a message. In addition, speakers may, on occasion, feel that you are not paying enough attention to their messages, particularly if those speakers are discerning listeners themselves.

Evaluative is also among your least natural approaches to listening. This suggests that you may not be inclined to assess critically the validity of a message as you are receiving it. Although there are a variety of contexts in which this is a good method of listening, this inclination may also have some negative consequences. You may be tempted to accept a message on face value without questioning the speaker's intentions or underlying rationale. Trivial or superficial aspects of a message (e.g., the speaker's status, appearance, or confidence) may often persuade you. You may respond more to emotional appeals and passion when it is most appropriate to attend to facts and ideas. Because you may not actively evaluate while listening, you also may have difficulty making decisions or drawing conclusions in a timely manner. The process of narrowing down alternatives may be difficult or even overwhelming at times.



Working with Your Listening Style

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Your Expectations of Others as Communicators:

Because our listening styles reflect our unspoken values and motivations, we often assume that others will have listening styles that are similar to our own. When others do not share our style, the chances of a miscommunication significantly increase. Even more important, we frequently misinterpret the real meaning of this miscommunication.

As someone who relies heavily on comprehensive listening, you may expect others to be as focused on the big picture as you are. Consequently, your speaking and listening may gravitate toward the conceptual. If you expect others to be equally comprehensive in their listening styles, you may speak in a manner that some may consider too theoretical or vague. They may be searching for concrete details while you are concerned with communicating the underlying ideas that give those details meaning. You may also expect others to be willing to take the time to truly understand an idea before they move onto a decision. Consequently, you may be more inclined than others to elaborate on ideas and explore their implications.

Your Listening Style in Different Situations:

Experts estimate that people filter out or change the intended meaning of what they hear in 70 percent of communications. The biggest contributing factor to miscommunication is using a listening approach that is not appropriate for either the environment or for the message being communicated. Effective listeners consider not only their own intentions, but also the intentions of the speaker. Below are four common goals that motivate us to converse with another person:

Persuading: to convince the listener about an idea or course of action

Informing: to convey information and ideas

Self-Expressing: to share personal feelings, values, and experiences

Pleasing: to entertain, comfort, or bring enjoyment to another person

Because of your listening style, you tend to choose listening approaches that interact well with many of these communication goals. And like everyone, your natural inclinations may, at times, lead you to choose less-than-optimal listening approaches. The Communication Gap Analysis grid on the next page highlights some of the situations in which you may be a particularly good communicator and some situations in which you may benefit from improvement.



Your Communication Gap Analysis

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The Communication Gap Analysis grid below displays the interaction between different listening approaches and different message goals. The feedback in each box is based on the degree to which each listening approach is natural for you.

- The unshaded boxes highlight some of your greatest strengths as a listener
- The lightly shaded boxes indicate strengths or growth areas of moderate importance
- The heavily shaded boxes draw attention to some potentially important growth areas for you as a listener

		GOAL OF THE MESSAGE				
		Task-Oriented		Relationship-Oriented		
		PERSUADING	INFORMING	SELF-EXPRESSING	PLEASING	
LISTENING APPROACH	Feeling-Oriented	APPRECIATIVE Focus: enjoying the listening experience	This approach is probably not relevant for you in these situations.	Most likely, speakers sense that their messages are warmly received.	Speakers probably feel that their expressions are welcome.	Speakers probably feel that you appreciate their efforts to entertain or please.
	EMPATHIC Focus: supporting and understanding the feelings of the speaker	Speakers probably sense that you are at least attentive to the passion that drives their arguments.	This approach is probably not relevant for you in these situations	Speakers probably sense that their feelings and concerns are valued and acknowledged.	Most likely, speakers recognize that you understand and accept their point of view as they attempt to entertain or please.	
	Information-Oriented	DISCERNING Focus: gathering complete information	You may not collect enough basic facts and details to make an informed decision.	You may gather information that is fragmented or inaccurate. You may miss significant details within a message.	You may miss many of the small details buried under the emotion that is expressed.	This approach is probably not relevant for you in these situations.
	COMPREHENSIVE Focus: understanding the meaning of information	Most likely, you are able to identify and organize the important, core issues of the argument.	You are probably skilled at relating information to existing knowledge and processing the underlying meaning of the message.	You may be highly skilled at identifying the deeper, fundamental concerns that drive the expression.	This approach is probably not relevant for you in these situations.	
	EVALUATIVE Focus: critique information and make a decision	You may not critically evaluate the motives behind the message or challenge a speaker's claims when appropriate.	You may accept facts or ideas without questioning their accuracy or considering the speaker's bias.	On occasion, you may be persuaded by emotional appeals that others might regard as manipulative.	At times, you may be vulnerable to persuasive attempts that only appear to be pleasing in nature.	



Your Communication Gap Analysis

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Communication Gap Analysis Summary:

According to the Communication Gap Analysis on the previous page, areas where you appear to have the **greatest strengths** are:

- In situations where speakers are attempting to inform you, you are probably skilled at relating information to existing knowledge and processing the underlying meaning of the message.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to persuade you, you are most likely able to identify and organize the important, core issues of their arguments.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to express themselves to you, you may be highly skilled at conceptualizing the deeper, fundamental concerns that drive the expression.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to express themselves to you, they probably sense that their feelings and concerns are valued and acknowledged.

Areas where you might face some of your **greatest challenges** are:

- In situations where speakers are attempting to persuade you, you may not critically evaluate the motives behind the message or challenge a speaker's claims when appropriate.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to inform you, you may gather information that is fragmented or inaccurate, and you may miss significant details within a message.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to inform you, you may accept facts or ideas without questioning their accuracy or considering the speaker's bias.
- In situations where speakers are attempting to persuade you, you may not collect enough basic facts and details to make an informed decision.

Based on the information above and throughout this report:

1. What listening approaches can you adopt or improve to better gather, understand, or act on information?


2. What listening approaches can you adopt or improve to strengthen relationships?




Your Action Plan

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Next Steps:

 As mentioned earlier, your results suggest that Discerning is one of your least natural listening approaches. There are a number of factors that interfere with a person's ability to listen with a discerning ear, such as daydreaming, tuning out too soon, diverting attention to distractions, elaborating on the message too early, or focusing on the speaker rather than the message.

- Spend some time observing yourself as a listener. What really keeps you from gathering thorough and accurate information in a conversation?
- Pay attention to when and how you tend to be most easily distracted and see if you can generate strategies to eliminate these distractions or temptations.
- Consider what memory aids might help you attend better to details (such as note taking, visual cues, or name associations). Brainstorm on ways to integrate these aids into your daily listening that would be most natural and helpful.

 Your results also suggest that Evaluative is one of your least natural listening approaches. Factors that sometimes interfere with evaluative listening are a lack of knowledge about the subject communicated, ignorance of persuasive tactics, unclear personal values or opinions on a topic, or a tendency to turn to others when forming judgments. One of the best ways to integrate this approach into your listening style is to rehearse a variety of questions while listening to a speaker. These questions might include the following:

- Is that a fact or an opinion?
- What evidence does this person have to support that claim?
- What is the rationale behind this argument?
- Are there alternative explanations for the conclusions that are being drawn?
- How does this fit with my own personal experience?
- What unspoken motives might this person have that are biasing this information?

With some effort, questions such as these often help people become better critical listeners and thinkers. In addition, take time to separate a speaker's passion from his or her logic. Further, be careful that you don't assume something to be true just because an expert said it. As a listener, be mindful of the temptation to confuse confidence with competence. A speaker's self-assurance is a trait that is often independent of actual knowledge.

Based on the feedback you have received so far, what specific steps can you take to improve your listening and communication skills?



Action Planning Grid

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In the first column below, list significant people in your life with whom you would like to improve communication. Below each name, list that person's most natural listening approach(es). If you don't know a person's natural listening approach(es), use the descriptions on the following pages to estimate which approach(es) best fit this person. Fill in the boxes in each row to identify potential communication problems and solutions.

Your Most Natural Listening Approaches: <i>Comprehensive</i>	Areas where you might misinterpret the behavior of this person:	Areas where this person might misinterpret your behavior:	Specific actions that can help minimize or avoid miscommunication:
Person: Natural Listening Approaches:			
Person: Natural Listening Approaches:			
Person: Natural Listening Approaches:			
Person: Natural Listening Approaches:			



Description:

People with a preference to appreciate while listening want to enjoy the listening experience. Since these listeners like to be entertained, they are more likely to pay attention to others if they enjoy their presentation.

Appreciative Listeners listen for inspiration and prefer listening to speakers who make them feel good about themselves, which helps them relax. Appreciative Listeners are also more likely to listen if the speaker is enjoying his or her performance. Appreciative Listeners care more about the overall impression of the speaker than the details being presented.

Appropriate Environment:

- Enjoyment of a concert, conversation, or pleasurable event

Focus

- To relax and enjoy the experience

Motivation

- To connect to the speaker on a casual, friendly level
- To be entertained
- To be inspired
- To enjoy
- To find humor in the situation

Behavioral Indicators

- Responds visibly to color, sound, language, and rhythm
- Smiles, laughs, and finds the humor in the message
- Matches the sender's enthusiasm or playfulness
- Relaxes
- Demonstrates an open, laidback posture
- Shows no signs of rushing the conversation
- Encourages the sender to elaborate on stories



 **Description:**

People with a preference to empathize while listening want to provide the speaker with a sounding board to offer support and reflection. Since Empathic Listeners are patient listeners, they tend to listen to the feelings and emotions that are revealed. They find it easy to relate to a speaker's feelings and may recognize what a speaker wants even before the speaker sees it clearly.

Empathic Listeners reflect what they hear others saying and let others know that they care about what has been said. As a result, Empathic Listeners are often approached by people who want to "let off steam." If asked for advice, however, the Empathic Listener will encourage others to decide for themselves.

Appropriate Environment:

- Counseling a friend, providing an opportunity for someone to "let off steam" or express their feelings

Focus

- To support the sender as he or she talks through concerns

Motivation

- To provide an opportunity for someone to express or vent thoughts and feelings
- To accept the message without judging
- To learn from other people's experiences

Behavioral Indicators

- Lets the sender know they care
- Lets the sender do the talking
- Shows interest
- Asks open-ended questions
- Remains relatively silent, not offering solutions immediately
- Reflects back the emotions that are being communicated (e.g., "That sounds frustrating.")
- Leans forward and maintains an open posture
- Nods
- Mirrors the emotions being spoken (e.g., looks concerned when the speaker is anxious)



 **Description:**

People with a preference to discern while listening want to make sure they get all the information. They frequently take notes on what a speaker says so that they will not forget it. Discerning Listeners want to know what the main message is, and they focus closely on any presentation or conversation.

In addition to the message, Discerning Listeners usually remember the speaker's appearance, behavior, and voice. Discerning Listeners find distractions very annoying and will do their best to eliminate them. They will likely tune out if there are too many distractions at any time while listening.

Appropriate Environment:

- Learning, gathering information

Focus

- To get complete information

Motivation

- To sort out the details
- To make sure nothing is missed
- To collect information in order to have it available later

Behavioral Indicators

- Takes notes
- Asks for clarification
- Concentrates
- Eliminates distractions
- Repeats to confirm accuracy
- Asks for details



Description:

People with a preference to comprehend while listening relate what they hear to what they already know by organizing and summarizing. They are good at recognizing key points and links between one message and another, even when a speaker is disorganized.

Comprehensive Listeners listen for how a speaker develops the arguments, so that they understand the rationale of the argument. They may ask questions to clarify a speaker's intention and relate what they hear to their own experience in order to better understand the message. Comprehensive Listeners can generally figure out what people intend to say, even if the speaker is not explicit. They can also recognize when someone is saying one thing and meaning something else. Comprehensive Listeners can tell when an individual does not understand what has been said, and they will be able to re-explain it more clearly.

Appropriate Environment:

- Taking direction from someone, determining what to do

Focus

- To organize and make sense of information

Motivation

- To relate the message to personal experience
- To understand the relationships among the ideas
- To determine the rationale of the speaker's argument
- To listen for the main idea and supporting ideas

Behavioral Indicators

- Elaborates on what has been said
- Asks for clarification of the sender's intended message
- Brings up related issues or metaphors
- Summarizes
- Explains the message to others in their own words
- Tries to capture the heart of the message and repeats it back to the sender



 **Description:**

People with a preference to evaluate while listening tend to look for the facts that support a speaker's comments. They do not accept something as true just because an expert says it. Evaluative Listeners listen for how a speaker develops the arguments in order to critique the message.

Evaluative Listeners try to figure out the speaker's intention before responding to the message and may mentally "argue" with the speaker. They will listen until they know what the speaker is saying, and then they will reply. If Evaluative Listeners do not like what a speaker is saying, they quit listening. Evaluative Listeners also tend to be skeptical of a speaker who is overly enthused about something. They think about how they would present the speaker's message differently.

Appropriate Environment:

- Making a decision, voting, drawing conclusions

Focus

- To make a decision based on the information provided

Motivation

- To relate what is heard to their personal beliefs
- To question the sender's motives
- To identify problems and find solutions
- To support the message with facts
- To accept or reject the message

Behavioral Indicators

- Actively agrees or disagrees
- Talks through the logic of the message
- Offers alternative ways of looking at a situation
- Expresses skepticism
- Gives the sender advice
- Looks for facts to support what the sender is saying
- Quits listening