

## THE LISTENING SKILLS OF A LEADER

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**Annotation:** *This article analyzes one of the essential competencies required for a leader's successful performance — listening skills. It emphasizes the ability of a leader to establish effective communication with subordinates, attentively listen to them, and thereby create a climate of trust within the work process. From the perspectives of social psychology and managerial psychology, listening is presented as one of the fundamental communicative skills that must be cultivated by a leader. The article also highlights how the leader's listening culture and persuasive interaction contribute to the formation of productive relationships within the organization.*

**Keywords:** *leader, listening skills, management psychology, communication culture, interaction, social psychology*

A leader, in their daily professional activities, engages in various social meetings, conversations, and interpersonal relations. Therefore, analyzing which conversations or meetings a leader considers important can provide insight into their level of communicative culture. Many experienced leaders acknowledge that one of the most complex aspects of leadership lies in the ability to understand and influence employees, and to correctly organize and manage their work. For this reason, modern applied social psychology and management psychology emphasize the development of communication skills — especially listening and respectful interaction — among adults, including organizational leaders.

Today, preparing executives and managers in various sectors, such as enterprises, private firms, and government institutions, requires psychological readiness for leadership responsibilities. Regardless of whether a person is a rector, director, department head, or leader in another field, without communicative competence, they cannot effectively integrate into a team or demonstrate their professional skills under market conditions. Every intellectual leader should therefore possess the ability and art of collaboration.

It is well known that in a conversation, one person speaks while the other listens. The effectiveness of this interaction depends on how well the two individuals complement and understand each other. A common misconception is that communication training focuses solely on speaking — especially on using logically sound and persuasive language — while neglecting the importance of listening. The famous American orator and psychologist Dale Carnegie stated: “A good conversationalist is not the one who speaks well, but the one who listens well.” He emphasized the development of listening abilities in individuals.

According to psychologist V. Karimova, “In today's world, the issue of leaders' listening skills has become more relevant than ever.” Experts have determined that leaders spend approximately 45% of their time listening to others. Senior professionals, administrators, and department heads reportedly earn 35–40% of their salaries for their ability to listen attentively. This demonstrates that among the most challenging aspects of communication, a leader's listening ability plays a crucial role in their development and ability to make informed judgments.

The German philosopher A. Schopenhauer rightly said, “If you want people to think well of you, listen to them.” Indeed, if someone speaks with emotion and is not being listened to, it may cause offense and discourage further dialogue. When a team member is speaking and the leader fails to listen, it can be seen as a serious breach of etiquette. So why is it that we often become skilled speakers but fail to become good listeners? Psychologists believe that the main obstacle is our tendency to become absorbed in our own thoughts and desires. As a result, we might appear to be listening while our minds are elsewhere.

Listening, just like speaking, has its own techniques and methods. As psychologist V. Karimova notes: “It is not entirely accurate to assume that the speaker dominates the conversation. In reality, effective listening creates such psychological closeness that it builds trust and a sense of security in the speaker.” Active and meaningful listening allows the listener to gain valuable information, while the speaker, who is sharing their thoughts without receiving feedback, may end up with nothing. Therefore, it is necessary to train people, especially leaders, to actively listen and to use listening techniques effectively.

When a leader listens carefully and attentively, they also cultivate self-respect and humility. Thus, listening is not a passive process, as is often thought. It

inspires and motivates the speaker, encourages the development of new ideas, and facilitates creativity. During team meetings, if a leader's speech is attentively listened to, both parties — the speaker and the listener — benefit equally from the interaction.

In conclusion, every individual's social experience, personality traits, and even shortcomings are shaped through communication. A person deprived of social interaction may retain individual qualities but cannot be considered a fully developed personality. Understanding the role of communication in personal development — and specifically the functions it performs in our lives — is essential for the modern leader.

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