

**EXERCISE 3**

Answers will vary. Point out that students with lots of yes answers need to change some of their habits.

**Did You Know...**

"There exist limitless opportunities in every industry. Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier."—Charles F. Kettering, 1876–1958, American electrical engineer and inventor

**LISTENING ACTIVELY**

Review what is involved in active listening. Model aloud how active listening should be done.

2. Do you tune in and out to what the speaker is saying but then forget to go back to the speaker and stick with your own thoughts instead?

**EXERCISE 3**

Copy the six points listed above on a sheet of paper. Evaluate your listening habits by answering "yes," "no," or "sometimes" to each item. Do your answers indicate you are a good listener?

All the habits mentioned above interfere with effective listening. While it is difficult to stop doing something that we have been doing for a long time, it can be done if we make a conscious effort. The next time you find yourself criticizing, stop and focus on the facts, not the person or the delivery. If you catch yourself faking attention, mentally bring yourself back into focus by adding something to the conversation, such as a question or a comment. When daydreams invade your mind, stop them by giving your brain another task such as summarizing important ideas the person is saying. Bad listening habits can be overcome if you recognize them and make an effort to change.

**LISTENING ACTIVELY**

Listening well involves work. It means you concentrate on what is being said, relate what you hear to what you already know, and look for implied meanings. **Active listening** involves giving positive feedback to a speaker by maintaining eye contact, smiling, and nodding. Not only do you show interest but you exercise emotional control. To concentrate you must disregard distractions. Block out noise. Do not allow yourself to become critical of the speaker or the delivery. Your main objective is to get ideas. You must have the willpower and energy to concentrate.

Once you hear an idea or a fact, relate it to your store of knowledge. How does this idea fit into what you already know about the topic? Are you surprised? Would you like to have more information? Should you change what you are currently doing in light of this new information? Do you know someone who is an expert on this topic? How would that person react to what was just said? Questions raised in your mind are good because it means you are thinking about what you just heard.

When someone talks, there is the spoken message and the unspoken message. An active listener "reads between the lines" by analyzing the person's posture, tone, word choice, facial expressions, and physical movements. For example, if you are discussing a problem with a coworker and that person drums her fingers on the desk, sighs, frowns, and rolls her eyes, you might conclude that this person is really not interested in solving the problem right now and opt for another time or a different approach.