

Reading 1: Do we know how to listen? Twelve suggestions to get to know each other better, Learning to listen, Aquilino Polaino-Lorente, Barcelona 2008, pp. 1-2.

Do we know how to listen? Twelve suggestions to get to know each other better.

1. When you attend a family or professional meeting, try to discreetly measure - you can use a simple stopwatch - the time taken by each of the attendees to speak. This way you will know who did or did not speak.
2. Observe who respects or does not respect the turn to speak, so that they do not interrupt who is speaking or break the common thread of the conversation that is taking place. With this observation, you can begin to identify those who are not listening.
3. Observe those who regularly overlap (when two people speak at the same time, without listening to each other). Here is another indicator to identify those who are not listening.
4. Observe if those who speak are only about themselves (as regards their persons) or if the topics they are talking about are really more general and allow people to open up to dialogue easily, making it possible for others to intervene (for others to participate as well in that conversation). This observation will allow you to identify the people whose desire for prominence is greater.
5. Observe who does not speak a single word in the course of the meeting. This observation will not allow you to identify those who listen, but it does identify those who do not speak.
6. Observe how many conversations are being held simultaneously and who introduces them, despite being a sudden change from the main topic of conversation that was being discussed. Here is another indicator to identify those who are not listening.
7. Observe how many people are or are not paying attention to those who are speaking at the moment. This observation helps to identify those who are not listening.
8. Observe if when someone says or asks something, you try to listen and understand them or you begin to think about what you are going to answer. This observation will allow you to know your ability to listen.
9. Observe if when someone speaks, you are trying to put yourself in their shoes and share your own feelings. This observation will allow you to know your ability to listen.
10. Observe if you get upset or angry when you are interrupted as soon as you start a topic of conversation. This observation will allow you to know your ability to listen.
11. Observe if when you say something, you feel that others are listening and understanding or each one is aware of other fragmentary conversations or only of himself. This observation will let you know if the people you are talking to are listening to you.
12. Observe if you become impatient because you cannot find the pause necessary to give your opinion about what is being discussed. This observation will allow you to know your ability to listen and speak.