



The Listening Skills of a ScrumMaster

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Agenda

- Intro
- Listening Skills
- Practicing Listening
- Summary and conclusions

Intro

- Turn to the person next to you and discuss
 - What are **good** listening skills?
 - What are **bad** listening skills

Timebox: 3 minutes

”To listen fully means to pay close attention to what is being said beneath the words.

You listen not only to the 'music,' but to the essence of the person speaking.

You listen not only for what someone knows, but for what he or she is.

Ears operate at the speed of sound, which is far slower than the speed of light the eyes take in.

Generative listening is the art of developing deeper silences in yourself, so you can slow our mind’s hearing to your ears’ natural speed, and hear beneath the words to their meaning.”

Peter Senge

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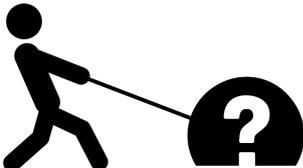
Why does a
ScrumMaster need
listening skills?



Some possible answers

- To listen to the Team in order to:
 - understand Team situation
 - understand Team development
 - allow team members to be listened to
- To help team members increasing their listening skills

Behavior of Good Listeners

- Show Respect 
- Keep Quiet!  
- Become the Master of the Question
- Check assumptions 

We need to focus

- Listening
 - is purposeful
 - requires control
 - requires total focus and engagement
 - is the front end of decision making

Understand your listening habits

- Opinionator
- Grouch
- Preambler
- Perseverator
- Answer Man
- Pretender

How to become a better Listener

- Diagnose yourself
- Identify possible cures
- Organize your questions

Techniques

- Organize Your Questions
 - Mandate
 - Plan
 - Team
 - Execution (How will we get it done?)
 - Personal
- A ScrumMasters Checklist
- ORID questions
 - Objective
 - Reflective
 - Interpretive
 - Decisional
- Your own system and techniques

Help Your Team

- Ensure the free and open flow of information and ideas
- Establish a reverence for fact-based discussions
- Generate new insights and more creative solutions
- Help build an Team that excites and energizes it's members

What to do next

1. Keep quiet
2. Challenge assumptions
3. Focus on what you need to know
4. Increase your tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty
5. Sort incoming information
6. Work your memory to gain insights
7. Demonstrate the best listening practices to lift everyones skills

Practice Listening

- Exercise

- I. Bad Listening

Bad Listening

1. Find a new partner
2. One is Talker one is Listener
3. Talker talks for one minute about something you are passionate about
Listener try to appear not interested.
4. Change roles
5. General debrief

Remember

Don't expect a tin ear to evolve to a platinum overnight.

- It takes time
- It takes discipline
- It takes constant attention

Good listening - the active and disciplined activity of probing and challenging the information garnered from others to improve its quality and quantity - is the key to building a base of knowledge that generates fresh insights and ideas.

Bernard T. Ferrari

Many great listeners exhibit three kinds of behavior:

1. Show respect
2. Keep quiet
3. Challenge assumptions

References

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