

## **Communication and Listening**

Communication is a process of sending and receiving messages. Each person has his/her own style of gathering, organizing and using the skills and knowledge that is presented to them. It is done by various methods, both verbally and non-verbally. Most people spend about 75% of every day either speaking or listening. Listening has three components: **Hearing**, **Comprehending**, and **Retaining**, yet most of us do not actively practice listening skills. Leaders spend more time communicating than on any other activity, yet they receive very little training.

The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service can provide workshops on Communication and Listening using a variety of teaching methods.

### **Communication and Listening Facts:**

- Each person has his/her own style of gathering, organizing and using the skills and knowledge that is presented to them.
- Most communication takes place non-verbally
- Body language is an important element of communication
- It's not just what you say, but how you say it.

### **Nonverbal messages are important too**

- Some major areas of nonverbal behaviors to explore are:
  - Eye contact
  - Facial expressions
  - Gestures
  - Posture and body orientation
  - Proximity
  - Paralinguistics
  - Humor

### **“Paralanguage” Not What But How!**

- Pitch – How high or low you speak.
- Volume – How loudly or softly you speak.
- Tone – How harshly or gently you speak
- Articulation – How clearly you pronounce your words
- Speed – How fast or slowly you speak

### **Helpful Hints to Improve Listening**

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its program to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status, and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

- Listen & ask for feedback.
- Have feeling for the speaker.
- Messages should be delivered in small units to improve retention.
  - **Avoid Overload!**
- If distracted by noise, move.
- Ask yourself questions & then write them down to ask afterwards.
- Tell someone about what you have heard within 8 hours.
- Keep your notes brief & neat.
- Remember that listening has three components: **Hearing, Comprehending, and Retaining.**
- Improve your vocabulary.
- Search for deeper meaning in the speaker's message.
- Do a mental review of the major points presented.