



Power Listening: Mastering the Most Critical Business Skill of All

Bernard T. Ferrari

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Listening is harder than it looks- but it's the difference between business success and failure. Nothing causes bad decisions in organizations as often as poor listening. But Bernard Ferrari, adviser to some of the nation's most influential executives, believes that such missteps can be avoided and that the skills and habits of good listening can be developed and mastered. He offers a step-by-step process that will help readers become active listeners, able to shape and focus any conversation.

Ferrari reveals how to turn a tin ear into a platinum ear. His practical insights include:

Good listening is hard work, not a passive activity Good listening means asking questions, challenging all assumptions, and understanding the context of every interaction Good listening results in a new clarity of focus, greater efficiency, and an increased likelihood of making better decisions Good listening can be the difference between a long career and a short one

Power Listening: Mastering the Most Critical Business Skill of All Details

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From Reader Review Power Listening: Mastering the Most Critical Business Skill of All for online ebook

Nishkarsh Swarnkar says

Practical advice delivered in a structured way. A very important read for anyone dealing with any kind of organisational dynamics (most of us).

Lisa says

Very business oriented. Since I've had good coach training, I was familiar with many of his ideas related to listening well.

But it would be a good book for someone in business. Also a good review of listening skills.

Tina says

The first half of the book, purely on the subject was excellent. The second half was on secondary skills related to listening and was not as good. I'd suggest buying it on the first half alone, which I would give 4-5 stars.

Alex says

It's a good book. But about 60% of it is about making decisions and what information you need to look for when you about to make one (on that topic I found Decisive much more comprehensive book).

Parts of book which deal with listening I found quite good, filled with insights and strategies for effective listening. But it's not the book about listening which I would advice as an introduction to listening techniques.

Stephen Pike says

Solid read that gives you some structure to active listening. I didn't find the book groundbreaking but I did like how the author broke down the ways to listen in different situations. Definitely a reference book for the future.

Larry Jebsen says

I'm not sure what I was hoping for. Always looking to make myself a more effective manager. It had practicable information and a few good tips and anecdotes that I got some out of. I don't know if it was just me, but I was happy to be finished with it. I just don't think it gave me anything new.

Soundview Executive Book Summaries says

Power Listening: Mastering the Most Critical Business Skill of All by Bernard T. Ferrari was chosen by Soundview Executive Book Summaries as one of the Top 30 Business Books of 2012.

THE SOUNDVIEW REVIEW:

Author and consultant Bernard T. Ferrari argues that many an organization's bad decisions can be traced to issues with listening. While readers may have initial reservations about the opinion that listening can lead to fluctuations in profit and loss, they should prepare to be convinced. Ferrari provides some intriguing evidence in his book *Power Listening: Mastering the Most Critical Business Skill of All*.

Ferrari holds up a grimace-inducing mirror when he identifies the six common archetypes of bad listeners. Executives will want to both submit to self-examination and seek out Ferrari's archetypes among their staff. Once a reader identifies the root cause of his or her company's listening issue, Ferrari walks him or her through the guidelines of effective listening.

The middle of the book's three sections provides readers with Ferrari's insights on building an information framework. He writes that the framework is the equivalent of "a set of file drawers representing the broad categories of business problem solving and action." Ferrari's own categories (mandate, plan, team, execution and personal) can easily be applied by executives to their own companies. He provides a set of questions that fit in each "folder." The questions help sharpen the reader's level of understanding and can simplify complicated business issues into digestible strategies.

Ferrari concludes the book by helping executives use listening to change the culture and dynamic of their organizations. Applying principles intended for individuals to an organization can occasionally trip up certain authors, but Ferrari accomplishes the task well. *Power Listening* offers that excellent feature of a book that can start on an executive's desk and later wind its way through the company.

Soundview's 8-page Executive Book Summary of *Power Listening* is available [here](#).

Zbyszek Sokolowski says

Author is a veteran consultant from Mc Kinsey Company, and he knows what he is talking about. Main impression that this is a book written by intelligent person for intelligent people. He describes archetypes of bad listeners. Clearly shows that the best managers are those who listen actively their subordinates and coworkers actively with respect. Actively means not talking too much and asking correct questions.

Arun Singh says

Too much office related info after the second part. To me- kind of lost the focus on listening.

Gregg Rozeboom says

Learn to Listen From A Leader Who Mastered Listening: I've been reading books on listening lately. I'm almost done with The Lost Art Of Listening, Just Listen, and The Coaching Habit. They each have their own unique approaches, but what I love about Power Listening is I really felt like I was able to learn from a man who has spent his life mastering how to listen effectively. This book is a culmination of his figuring out what works best in regards to listening as a leader. I felt like I received 30 years worth of real world experience boiled down into an easy to read and highly practical coaching session. I'm definitely a better leader after reading this book and I'm sure I'll refer back to it often.

Jordan says

Probably need to listen to this again...

Jeremy Wetherell says

I often struggle to transform my thoughts during a meeting into questions that facilitate empowering and insightful conclusions. I found the principles and listening framework in this book very helpful. I'll lay out the summary structure and key questions below, however the thought process and explanations in the book are worth the reading. - Jeremy Wetherell

Summary & Framework

Part 1: Listen Up!

1. Listening is purposeful.
2. Listening requires control.
3. Listening requires total focus and engagement.
4. Listening is the front end of decision-making.

What Kind of Listener Are You?

1. The Opinionator
2. The Grouch
3. The Preambler
4. The Perseverator
5. The Answer Man
6. The Pretender

Key Listening Behaviors:

1. Respect Your Conversation Partner
2. Apply the 80/20 rule to listening
3. Challenge all assumptions

Part 2: Sorting The Chaos (A roadmap or set of mental file folders to listen for.)

1. WHAT IS THE MANDATE?

Question 1: Why are we here?

- What are the enduring, overarching aspirations?
- What is the fundamental reason for being?
- On what does the organization base its identity?

Question 2: Are there any misalignment?

Question 3: Can we work with this mandate?

- Does the mandate capture the imagination and energy of the leadership team?
- Can the mandate be communicated more broadly to all the stakeholders?
- Can the mandate be translated into a plan?

2. WHAT IS THE PLAN?

Question 1: What are the specific objectives that begin to move a company toward its mandate?

Question 2: What are the specific initiatives that will help achieve the objectives?

Question 3: What is the timeline?

- Are you and your CP in agreement about how often, and by what standards, you will mark your progress, in order to maintain confidence in your schedule?

Question 4: What assets are required, and are they available?

Question 5: What are the risks we will be facing?

3. WHAT IS THE TEAM?

Question 1: What capabilities do we need?

Question 2: What are the mind-sets of the team members?

Question 3: What are the roles of the team members?

Question 4: Will this assignment be good for the individuals on the team?

Question 5: What are the inescapable realities?

Question 6: How is the chemistry?

Question 7: What are the consequences of performance?

4. HOW WILL WE GET IT DONE?

Question 1: How are we making decisions?

Question 2: Are we getting the right information at the right time?

Question 3: How do we manage complexity?

Question 4: Do we have a rhythm?

5. IS IT GETTING PERSONAL? (Everything we communicate reveals something about who we are, how we think, what we feel, and what we think is important.)

Question 1: What does this person value?

Question 2: What are the individual's personal aspirations?

Question 3: How does this person interact with colleagues and others?

Question 4: What is the person's level of self-awareness?

Part 3: Reaping The Benefits

Changing Your Organization Through Listening:

- Foster a more discipline and productive organization.
- Ensure the free and open flow of information and ideas.
- Establish a reverence for fact-based discussions.
- Generate new insights and more creative solutions.
- Build an organization that excites and energizes its people.

Pete says

Good advice about listening backed-up by anecdotes from his consulting career diverging in the final third to strategic planning advice built around his listening principles. In some ways two books in one. The listening advice is meaningful (although the anecdotes aren't always convincing as examples), and the strategic advice provides a valuable synopsis of helpful, if often familiar, ideas.

Cara says

Not all boring books are bad, and not all bad books are boring, but this book is both boring and bad. The *idea* of a book teaching listening skills is a great one - there is no doubt that listening skills are important. But this book just talks a lot about listening without really teaching you anything. It's 95% filler, and that explains why it's so boring.

Akmal Soliev says

It was ok, just ok. You start to develop listening and filter skill throughout the years, this just tells you that you will develop them. You can be with a person for 3 hours and only after those 3 hours realize that that person was talking; if it isn't important information you won't listen.
