Lesson Preparation:
- Review Air Force Handbook (AFH 33-337), The Tongue and Quill, Chapter 11. Complete the Listening Habits Survey at the end of this section before coming to class.

Cognitive Lesson Objective:
- Comprehend that effective listening positively affects mission accomplishment.

Cognitive Samples of Behavior:
- Explain the differences between hearing and listening.
- Define effective listening and the five steps of the listening process.
- Describe the 10 most common listening problems.
- Explain the seven-step process for improving listening ability.

Affective Lesson Objective:
- Value that effective listening positively affects mission accomplishment.

Affective Sample of Behavior:
- Without prompting, students consistently interact within their flights to accomplish the mission, using effective listening skills.
Communication is a vital skill that each of us, as potential supervisors, leaders, and followers, must continually try to improve. We can’t hope to lead, motivate, train or evaluate others without mastering the ability to clearly communicate our thoughts and ideas. In Air Force Doctrine Document Volume II, Leadership, the competency of personal leadership focuses on necessary skills for face-to-face, interpersonal relations that directly influence human behavior and values. A specific competency listed under personal leadership is “fostering effective communication.” In addition, personal leadership skills are critical at all leadership levels: strategic, operational, and tactical.

In this class we’ll also review the role of effective listening and how it relates to the communication process. You receive more information by listening than by any of the other means of communication—writing, speaking, or reading—but listening is our weakest skill. As listeners, we often fail to do our part in the communication process. As a result, poor listening is one of the most significant problems facing organizations today. By gaining a better understanding of just what listening involves, by recognizing the barriers to effective listening, and by forming good listening habits, we can learn to become better listeners.

Use the following pages as a note-taker during class:

Listening: The Neglected Skill

1. Listening vs. Hearing
   - Hearing
   - Listening

2. Listening is a selective process of receiving, attending to, understanding, evaluating, and responding.
   - Receiving
   - Attending to
   - Understanding
   - Evaluating
   - Responding

3. Listening - What do we know about it?
   - Listening is the most used of all communication skills
   - Listening is the least developed of all communication skills
   - Training improves listening
4. Listening - What makes this skill so challenging?
   • Uninteresting topics
   • Speaker’s delivery
   • Over stimulation by the message
   • Listening for facts
   • Outlining everything
   • Faking attention
   • Distractions
   • Avoiding the difficult
   • Emotional words
   • Wasting the speed differential

5. Listening – What steps can help us to be better listeners?
   • Be conscious of your listening behavior
   • Motivate yourself to listen
   • Prepare yourself to listen
   • Control your reactions
   • Work at listening
   • Listen for ideas
   • Concentrate on the message

6. How can we help others to listen to us?
   • Be a good listener yourself
   • Be interesting to talk to
   • Use good eye contact
   • Tell the truth
   • Use the listener’s name regularly
LISTENING BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT

(by Major A. Cecil; adapted from Listening Habits Survey by Steil, Barker, and Watson, 1938; and “Listening Skills” article in People, Partnerships, and Communities Newsletter, Issue, 1997)

Complete this assessment before the lesson. Indicate how often you do these 10 listening habits. Then mark the points for each item, as indicated, and find your total score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>Almost Always 2pts</th>
<th>Usually 4pts</th>
<th>Sometimes 6pts</th>
<th>Seldom 8pts</th>
<th>Almost Never 10pts</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shows a negative attitude about the topic: “Why do I need to hear about this?” or “This is boring.”</td>
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<td>2. Focuses on or easily distracted by speaker’s missteps, such as “um, uh” or monotone style</td>
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<td>3. Loses temper or patience with one point of speech; obsesses on that point</td>
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<td>4. Focuses on facts or minor points in the speech</td>
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<td>5. Writes down as much as possible on what the speaker says</td>
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<td>6. <strong>Very discreetly</strong> does something else other than listen while the speaker is talking</td>
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<td>7. Does other things during speech, such as whispering, daydreaming, thinking about the weekend, or watching hall traffic</td>
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<td>8. Disinterested in any difficult, challenging information; writes no notes or questions</td>
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9. Upset by or loses temper with words that trigger strong feelings, such as a “pet peeve”

10. Not interested in where the speaker is going with topic, the speaker’s gestures/movements, or summarizing

Bibliography: