



Learning to Listen Webinar Description

Effective Listening in Professional and Technical Environments

In technical and operational environments, most communication failures are not caused by a lack of information—they are caused by a lack of listening. In water and wastewater treatment settings especially, missed details, rushed conversations, and distracted interactions can lead to operational mistakes, misunderstandings between shifts, and strained relationships between operators, supervisors, engineers, and regulators. This focused 2-hour webinar develops practical active listening skills that directly improve communication accuracy, teamwork, and decision-making in the field. Participants will learn the difference between active and passive listening and how everyday behaviors—such as interruptions, multitasking, or focusing on responses instead of understanding—can undermine clarity and trust.

The course explores how to listen with intent rather than reaction, including techniques such as paraphrasing, providing meaningful feedback, and maintaining patience during complex or high-pressure conversations. Special emphasis is placed on recognizing distractions, managing emotional responses such as judgment or immediate advice-giving, and handling difficult conversations involving rumors, conflicts, or complaints.

Participants will also learn how effective listening strengthens leadership and team culture. Topics include reading the room, interpreting nonverbal communication, creating space for others to be heard, and understanding how listening itself improves the quality of communication throughout an organization. Practical field examples will be used to show how better listening leads to fewer misunderstandings, better problem-solving, and improved operational consistency.

By the end of the session, participants will have actionable tools to improve how they listen in day-to-day interactions, resulting in stronger working relationships, clearer communication, and more effective teamwork across all levels of their organization.