

*Better Listening: Learn the words you'll hear. A tip for English for Business students by Andrew D. Miles.*

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Improve  
your  
listening  
comprehension  
by  
anticipating  
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## Better Listening: Anticipate!

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When we can't understand native speakers we often blame our listening comprehension. This is true... sometimes. In many cases, it's just that people are using vocabulary we've never heard before.

Natives know several thousand more words than most students so understanding speakers is often hard. However, we do have some good news. For one, the gap is not so big because people use easy words (*and, the, are, but* etc.) more often than complicated ones. On the other hand—in business English at least—you can easily anticipate most of the difficult vocabulary by studying it.

### **Learn the words**

Memorise the vocabulary related to your job or company. Write a list of expressions and have your teacher repeat them one by

one until you recognise them all. These expressions should also include words that are commonly said together (*nice to meet you, sales figures etc.*) so you not only understand individual words but patterns too.

### **Automate listening**

Insist on specific vocabulary until you recognise it instantly. Listening must be automatic to be useful because speakers rarely stop to wait for us.

### **Role play**

Practise situations so you know what type of language to expect in real-life conversation. If you're visiting a client ask your teacher to be the client. If it's a meeting, tell your teacher to ask you possible questions. This will help you listen to specific vocabulary and should allow you to recognise it later.

### **Watch speakers**

Watch corporate videos or documentaries centred on your profession. Most specialised vocabulary will appear there. If you're attending a conference, listen to a few of the speakers' presentations. If you can't find any, look for videos on the subject.

*Gap: difference, empty space.*

*Pattern: words that go together.*

*Reward: prize, benefit.*

*Likely: probable.*

*Allow: let*

In summary, we can improve our understanding if we anticipate the words we will hear. It won't take too much time and the rewards could be immense.

Would you like to read more about listening? Click on the link for an article on identifying important info:

<http://www.englishfb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Better-Listening-and-identifying-important-info-by-AD-Miles.pdf>



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