

# WHY WE DON'T HEAR OTHERS



If you want to listen so you really hear what others say,  
make sure you're not a:

- **Mind reader.** You'll hear little or nothing as you think "What is this person really thinking or feeling?"
- **Rehearser.** Your mental tryouts for "Here's what I'll say next" tune out the speaker.
- **Dreamer.** Drifting off during a face-to-face conversation can lead to an embarrassing "What did you say?" or "Could you repeat that?"
- **Identifier.** If you refer everything you hear to your experience, you probably didn't really hear what was said.
- **Comparer.** When you get side-tracked assessing the messenger, you're sure to miss the message.
- **Derailer.** Changing the subject too quickly tells others you're not interested in anything they have to say.
- **Sparrer.** You hear what's said but quickly belittle it or discount it. That puts you in the same class as the derailer.
- **Placater.** Agreeing with everything you hear just to be nice or to avoid conflict does not mean you're a good listener.

Source: The Writing Lab, Department of English, Purdue University Press, 1356 Heavilon Hall, West Lafayette, IN 47907.

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