









Four ears

	<p><u>Time frame:</u> ~ 45 minutes</p>
	<p><u>Location:</u> indoors</p>
	<p><u>Participants:</u> 3 - 20 persons (the exercise can be realised with one group of 3 – 6 persons with max. four groups)</p>
	<p><u>Material:</u> 4 pinboards or tables; sheets (see below); lots of cards & pens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in each corner of the room, there is one pinboard/table, one on the ear “facts”, one on the ear “self-revelation”, one on the ear “relationship” and one on the ear “demand”; - the respective sheet is on the board/table; - there are cards and pens at each board/table
	<p><u>Procedure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - before starting the exercise, the trainer explains the four-ear-model of Schultz von Thun (see sheet); - the participants are divided into groups of 3 – 6 persons, max. four groups; - if the participants are able, they can discuss and do the exercise on their own, if not they need either a “guide” who leads the group from one board to the next or there is a guide at each board; - the group can discuss the examples and think of further examples from their own lives. <p>Variation A) each group comes to each of the 4 pinboards, discusses the topic and pins cards on the pinboard with their impressions; after 10 minutes, the groups change pinboards and go to the next topic;</p> <p>Variation B) each group only works with one topic; the group discusses the example on the pin board, thinks of more examples from their own lives, chooses one own examples and prepares a short role play; after 30 minutes, the groups assemble and present their “particular ear” by acting the role play and giving some short comments</p>

	<p><u>Goal / purpose:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- participants experience and train the different aspects of understanding and interpreting a message- participants get a feeling for their own “preferred” ways of interpreting a message and become more sensitive when detecting their communication partners’ “strong ears”
	<p><u>Questions for discussion:</u></p> <p>see sheets below!</p>
	<p><u>Source:</u> Pro-Skills 2011 / Schulz von Thun, F. (1991). Miteinander reden 1: Störungen und Klärungen. Hamburg: rororo.</p>

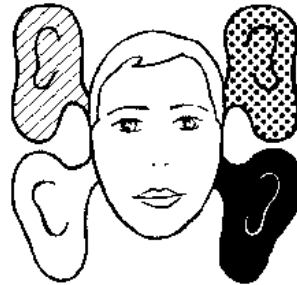
Four-Ear-Model

(Source: Schultz von Thun, German psychologist and communication scientist)

Each message has four aspects and each receiver has four ears:

Facts:
mere data & facts of message

Relationship:
information on relationship
between sender & receiver



Self-revelation:
speaker gives information on himself
(motives, values, emotions etc.)

Demand:
wish or demand to the receiver

Example: (black: his message; blue: her interpretation)

Facts:
"I see something green"
"He sees something green"

Relationship:
"I expect that you know what it is"
"He thinks I'm a bad cook!"



Self-revelation:
"I don't know what it is"
"He doesn't like it"

Demand:
"Please tell me what it is!"
"I shall only cook things he likes."

Often people have one ear that's more sensitive than the others. Probably you know a person who always interprets personal criticism or blame in very simple and neutral messages!? This person has a very sensitive ear for relationship-messages.

⇒ **It's not useful to hear only one aspect of a message! We should not interpret aspects of messages that are not clearly sent by the speaker!**

Ear 1: Facts

At first glance, hearing the mere facts of a message seems to be the best solution for correct understanding. But is this true?



⇒ *Get into discussion:*

- What happens when people only hear the facts of a message?
- Do you know situations or persons in your own life with a strong tendency to hear facts?
- How do you feel when you communicate with these persons?

Ear 2: Self-revelation

Example:



[Father looking into the messy room of his son]

Father: "What absolute chaos!! You are a slob!! It's horrible to live in such a mess!"

Son: "Did you have a bad day in the office, dad?"

⇒ *Get into discussion:*

- What's the boy's benefit of interpreting his father's statement like this?
- How could the father formulate the sentence so the son with the self-revelation-ear will understand correctly?
- Do you know persons who have a strong tendency to interpret self-revelation while communicating?

Ear 3: Relationship

Example:



⇒ *Get into discussion:*

- What is happening in this scene?
- What kind of problems will the couple have if the woman always hears with her relationship-ear?
- Do you remember situations in your life when you had a strong relationship-ear? What happened, and how did you solve the situation?

Ear 4: Demand

Example:



⇒ *Get into discussion:*

- What will happen to people who always interpret demands while communicating? How will other persons probably react to these demand-hearers?
- Do you know persons in your everyday life who have this strong demand-ear?
- How could you protect yourself from having a strong demand-ear?