

~ Listening Skills ~

A Good Listener

- Faces the speaker and leans into the conversation
- Maintains open body language
- Indicates listening by nodding and making acknowledging responses (e.g., "I see," "uh-uh").
- Avoids interruptions or distractions
- Allows the speaker to finish thoughts
- Asks open-ended questions that carry no pre-judgment
- Checks by paraphrasing or reframing, shown that he/she has heard accurately and fully
- Acknowledges the feeling in what is heard
- Concentrates on what is being said rather than his/her own response

** Please note: The above guidelines are contextual and may vary from culture to culture, from organization to organization, and from one person to another.*

Active Listening

- **Attentive Silence:**
Helps the:
Speaker to pause, think, and express his/her feelings.
Listener to reflect on what has been said or not said.
- **Inquiring:**
Helps to build clarity for the speaker and listener alike.
Supports the speaker to delve deeper into the issue.
Example: "What were your thoughts at the time?" How did you address the problem?"
- **Paraphrasing:**
Communicates the listener's understanding to the speaker.
Demonstrates that the listener cares and is focused on the speaker.
Example: "So what you are saying is that at the time you were feeling angry."
- **Summarizing:**
Provides a description of the key points made by the speaker.
Helps to create a full picture of the speaker's perspective and concerns.
Example: "First you called Sue. She told you she didn't have time to talk and you felt angry hearing that. So next you called Dave, etc."
- **Barriers to Active Listening:**
When the listener is preoccupied and not attentive.
Judgments and assumptions about the speaker.
Preparing a response while listening.