

Active Listening Skills

Attending

- A: Eye contact
- B: Posture
- C: Gesture

S.O.L.E.R. Five steps to attentive listening

- Squarely** face the person
- Open** your posture
- Lean** towards the sender
- Eye** contact maintained
- Relax** while attending

Paraphrasing

What is it?

Restating a message, but usually with fewer words. When possible, try to be concise.

Purpose:

1. To test your understanding of what you heard.
2. To communicate that you are trying to understand what is being said. If you're successful, paraphrasing indicates that you are following the speaker's verbal explorations and that you're beginning to understand the basic message.

When listening consider asking yourself...

- What is the speaker's basic **thinking** message?
- What is the person's basic **feeling** message?

Example:

S: I just don't understand, one minute she tells me to do this, and the next minute to do that.

X: *She really confuses you.*

S: I really think he is a very nice guy. He's so thoughtful, sensitive, and kind. He calls me a lot.
He's fun to go out with.

X: *You like him very much, then.*

Clarifying

What is it: Process of bringing vague material into sharper focus.

Purpose:

- To untangle unclear or wrong listener interpretation.
- To get more information
- To help the speaker see other points of view
- To identify what was said

Examples:

- *I'm confused, let me try to state what I think you were trying to say.*
- *You've said so much, let me see if I've got it all.*

Perception Checking

What is it: Request for verification of your perceptions.

Purpose:

1. To give and receive feedback
2. To check out your assumptions

Example:

Let me see if I've got it straight. You said... Is that what you are saying?

Summarizing

What is it: pulling together, organizing, and integrating the major aspects of your dialogue. **Pay attention to** various themes and emotional overtones. Put key ideas and feelings into broad statements. **DO NOT** add new ideas.

Purpose:

- To give a sense of movement and accomplishment in the exchange
- To establish a basis for further discussion.
- Pull together major ideas, facts, and feelings

Example:

So, what you're saying is... summarize everything you think you heard.

Primary Empathy

What is it: Reflection of content and feelings.

Purpose:

1. To show that you're understanding the speaker's experience
2. To allow the speaker to evaluate his/her feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else

Basic Formula: You feel (*state feeling*) because (*state content*)

Empathy Example:

You're feeling "frustrated" because no one will let you tell your side of the story.

Advanced Empathy

ACTIVE LISTENING Handout 1

What is it: reflection of content and feeling at a deeper level

Purpose: To try and get an understanding of what may be deeper feelings

Example:

I get the sense that you are really angry about what was said and the fact that you weren't allow to tell your side of the story, but I am wondering if you also feel a little hurt by it.

You said that you feel more confident about contacting employers, but I wonder if you also still feel a bit scared.

RESOURCE: <http://www.taft.cc.ca.us/lrc/class/assignments/actlisten.html> January 09

Active Listening Observation Sheet

Directions: As you observe the communication between your peers, check all the appropriate boxes representing what took place. Be prepared to summarize what you saw using this matrix checklist.

Squarely face	<input type="radio"/> All the time	<input type="radio"/> Sometimes	<input type="radio"/> Hardly any
Open posture	<input type="radio"/> All the time	<input type="radio"/> Sometimes	<input type="radio"/> Hardly any
Leaning towards	<input type="radio"/> All the time	<input type="radio"/> Sometimes	<input type="radio"/> Hardly any
Eye Contact	<input type="radio"/> All the time	<input type="radio"/> Sometimes	<input type="radio"/> Hardly any
Relaxed/attentive	<input type="radio"/> All the time	<input type="radio"/> Sometimes	<input type="radio"/> Hardly any
Paraphrasing	<input type="radio"/> Restated thinking	<input type="radio"/> Restated feelings	<input type="radio"/> Neither
Clarifying	<input type="radio"/> Asked to repeat	<input type="radio"/> Asked for more information	<input type="radio"/> Did not seek clarifications
Perception Checking	<input type="radio"/> Gave feedback	<input type="radio"/> Checked assumptions	<input type="radio"/> Did check perceptions
Empathy	<input type="radio"/> Feeling	<input type="radio"/> Reason	<input type="radio"/> Missed this
Advanced Empathy	<input type="radio"/> Feeling	<input type="radio"/> Reason	<input type="radio"/> Hidden feeling
Summary	<input type="radio"/> Covered everything	<input type="radio"/> Covered most everything	<input type="radio"/> Missed the point

Notes: