

active listening:

appreciate the difference
between listening and
hearing.

- listening attitudes
- questions that ride
- magic pause summaries



Active Listening Techniques

| | Technique | Purpose | How to Do This |
|---------------------------|--|---|--|
| Inviting Information | Encouraging | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To convey interest To encourage the other person to keep talking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize distractions Be aware of body language |
| | Clarifying Questions <i>"Can you say more about that?"</i> <i>"What happens when....?"</i> <i>"What is it that I'm doing that's a problem?"</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To clarify what is said To get more information To help the speaker be concrete & specific | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask open-ended questions |
| Acknowledging Information | Restating <i>"So you've been trying to get this problem resolved for several weeks. Is that right?"</i> <i>"So you think I'm singling you out because you're a woman. Is that right?"</i> <i>"So you find the process too complicated. Is that right?"</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To show that you're listening and understand To check your meaning and interpretation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put the speaker's key points in your own words |
| | Reflecting Feelings <i>"You seem upset about..."</i> <i>"You're really frustrated at the length of time this process is taking."</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To show that you understand how the other person feels To help the other person consider his/her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the speaker's emotions |

| | Technique | Purpose | How to Do This |
|--|--|--|--|
| | <p>Validating</p> <p><i>“It’s important to you that you get all the help you deserve.”</i></p> <p><i>“You raised your voice to get my attention. Is that right?”</i></p> <p><i>“So you’ve done everything you can think of to resolve this, is that right?”</i></p> | <p>1. To acknowledge the speaker’s values and how they affect the conflict</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the speaker’s values, positive intentions or positive efforts |

Active Listening Attitudes

Curiosity – Know that you don’t know everything. Resist assumptions. People and situation are unique and complex. Expect to be surprised.

Genuine Interest – Real listening is impossible without having a genuine interest in what’s important to someone else.

Questions that Ride and Don’t Drive

This skill helps people uncover and express what is important to them. It recognizes that people themselves know best what is important to them. They just need someone to draw that out by asking good questions.

Questions that Ride:

- 1) Follow what seems to be on someone’s mind** rather than what you want to hear (Ride don’t drive)
- 2) Are very open**, inviting more information and showing curiosity.

| Questions that Drive | Questions that Ride |
|---|------------------------------------|
| You must have really resented that right? | How did that affect you? |
| After you received the message from the teacher, did you call them right back? | What happened next? |
| You know, sometimes people get carried away and don’t really mean everything they say. Do you think she really meant it that way? | How did her comment make you feel? |

| Questions that Drive | Questions that Ride |
|--|---|
| Do you think maybe you overreacted? | You mentioned earlier that ‘maybe you raised your voice.’ Can you say more about that? |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Driving tends to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provoke defensive reactions, ➤ Shut down communication ➤ Make the person feel their ideas are not important | <p style="text-align: center;">Riding tends to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Help the person explore what’s really important to them ➤ Make them feel listened to |

What’s challenging?

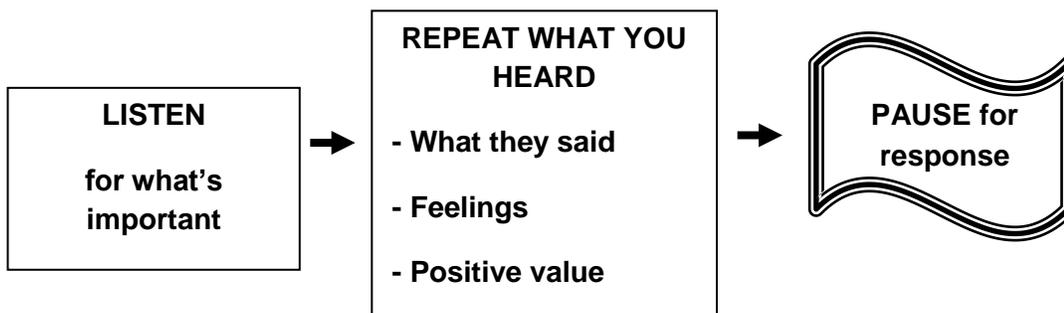
- 1) Avoiding jumping to conclusions about what’s important to them or about what they can do to solve their situation.
- 2) Being genuinely interested and genuinely curious in what they have to say. This is particularly challenging if you are stressed, or busy, or upset with them.

Magic Pause Summaries

Even the best listening doesn’t assure that the person feels heard. This is why you are encouraged to reflect back what you think you are hearing. Communication skills courses call this skill by many names including *restatement, validation, summarizing, paraphrasing and reframing*. In all cases the basic idea is the same which is to first listen carefully for the important information that is being conveyed, and then reflect that back to the person in your own words.

The pause after you have done this is a crucial part of the skill and is often left out. It clearly confirms the value that you place on hearing the person correctly. Without it, even the best summary may sound as though you are dismissing their view.

The Basic Idea of Magic Pause Summaries



Examples Using the Magic Pause

1) I'll be darned if I'm going to listen to anything you have to say anymore. You just do whatever you want and couldn't care less about anybody else.

-I can tell you're upset, let's talk it over. It sounds like teamwork is important to you? <Pause>

2) I can't do this job unless I get better information. I'm not a miracle worker you know.

-So you don't have the information you need to do your work and you feel stuck because of that. Is that right? <Pause>

3) We're not going to get anywhere unless we help each other out around here.

-You feel we could work better as a team and co-operate more. <Pause>

What's challenging?

- 1) Zeroing in on what is important to them
- 2) Repeating in your own words in a way that shows genuine interest
- 3) The magic pause! Waiting to see if you have heard them correctly. Don't rush on to problem solving or to your next message.