

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is more than just 'hearing' the words being said. It's fully concentrating, understanding and responding to the complete message. It's listening with all senses.

We often get distracted and half-listen as we are thinking about something else. Focus your attention on the speaker and let them know that you are listening by demonstrating 5 key techniques.

1



Eye Contact:

Eye contact during a conversation shows that you're giving your undivided attention and that you really care.

2



Avoid Distractions:

Remove all potential distractions such as phones, gadgets and other people. You will need to learn to avoid such distractions if the other person is to feel valued and fully listened to.

3



Body Language:

Show that you are listening via occasional nodding, note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting with your hands on show. Also provide encouragement to the other person with small verbal comments like 'yes' and 'uh huh'.

4



Give Feedback:

Personal filters and beliefs can often distort what we hear. Ensure you fully understand the message by reflecting on what has been said.

5



Respond Appropriately:

Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. Be open and honest in your response, and treat the other person in a way that shows respect.

Tips:

~ Responding emotionally? Be honest and ask for more information:

"I may not understand you correctly & I find myself taking what you said personally. What I thought you just said is XX; is that what you meant?"

Benefits:

- When people listen attentively to others, better rapport and relationships are built
- Avoids misunderstanding as it encourages you to confirm you understand what the other person has said
- Showing genuine effort to understand opens people up to say more

Action: Reflect back on a conversation that you've had when you wondered if the other person was listening to what you were saying. How did you feel?