

Attentive, Accurate, and Active Listening



A wonderful accompaniment to this exercise is to first watch the Julian Treasure Ted Talk, 5 Ways to Listen Better

https://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare

Option 1

In an everyday interaction, practice these seven steps for accurate listening. Reflect on your experience. Was this difficult or easy for you? Where did you run into trouble? Do you think you can practice this often?

- 1 You must concentrate on not talking while the other person is talking. Be sure to pay attention and to look directly at the speaker.
- 2 Be sure you are listening to the other person when he or she is talking instead of preparing for your reply.
- 3 Make sure you are paying attention to how the person is behaving.
- 4 Be aware of the body language of the other person.
- 5 Let the other person know that you're listening—for example, by nodding.
- 6 When the other person stops talking, try to paraphrase or translate what he or she said. Reflect what you think you have heard. This technique helps to ensure if there is a clear understanding.
- 7 Try to recognize the individual's feelings, for example, you can say, "You sound angry," or "You seem to be upset."

Option 2

Consider for example a person in your family or at work with whom you have a different opinion. Follow the steps below on how you can practice reflective listening and really hear the other person in real-life situations. You can use this tool whenever you have to deal with a discussion or conflict between people. Reflect on your experience. Was this difficult or easy for you? Where did you run into trouble? Do you think you can practice this often?

Step 1

Choose a person with whom you are having relationship difficulties or a person that you know holds different beliefs from your own, and really try to step into that person's shoes for a period of time. For example, try to imagine you are doing someone else's work. You can note whether your ability to emphasize changes based on seeing the other person's point of view.

Step 2

Think about the conversations that you have had with that person. Consciously check your own interpretations of what that person is saying.

Step 3

You can begin on focusing on them and before moving forward, think about what would happen if you framed the conversation from the perspective of "I just want to make sure I understand you. Can I clarify?" Rarely people say no to this.

Step 4

Clarify what you've heard by reflecting the meanings and feelings from the other person. You can check if you fully understood the other by asking.

Step 5

When you are speaking you can also ask the other person if he or she wouldn't mind sharing what they've heard you say. Then you can consider how you would correct the other if you feel misunderstood.

Option 3

With a partner, practice listening by not speaking. One person speaks about something exciting coming up for two minutes. The other person listens without making any verbal responses. The listener then retells the story using "I" with as much detail and perhaps emotion as the original teller. The partners switch.



Reflect on the following questions:

How did it feel to be a speaker when the other person just listened and did not provide any verbal expressions?

Did any nonverbal signals encourage the speaker?

How did it feel to be the listener? To not say anything?

How did it feel to take on the other person's story as your own?

