

Listening

Listening is foundational to good people management and development. Other essential people skills are difficult (if not impossible) without the foundation of mutual understanding that comes from good listening. This module offers a practical, skill-based approach to improved listening.

How to Attend

- Physical focus: making eye contact, turning toward the other person and not trying to do other tasks
- Verbal focus: not trying to carry on other conversations (even via email)
- Mental focus: creating a mental attitude that supports your body language and your single focus

How to Invite

- Physical tracking: nodding, matching gestures and expressions
- Verbal tracking: non-word sounds (e.g., “uh-huh”), encouraging phrases and asking brief questions that specifically encourage the speaker to begin or continue speaking

How to Restate

- Short
- In your own words
- The essence
- Not too often
- Include feelings if they’re part of the speaker’s message

How to Preview Your Questions

- Tell why you’re asking the question **or** tell what you’ll do with the answer.



Listening can help you:

- Influence and persuade
- Understand others’ needs, goals and expectations
- Defuse strong emotions
- Ensure that you and others are agreeing to the same things
- Consistently build trust and respect