

Active Listening Techniques

TECHNIQUE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Bracket	Internally, acknowledge and set aside your own advocacy, argument, point of view or judgment and become curious about the speaker's point of view.	<p>Speaker: "I really don't believe you are committed to this project."</p> <p>Listener: (internal voice) "I hate what they're saying, and I'm going to listen to them."</p>
Reflect	Confirm understanding by repeating the speaker's exact words.	<p>Speaker: "I believe that we should stop the project."</p> <p>Listener: "So, you think we should stop the project."</p>
Paraphrase	Rephrase using your own words to confirm the speaker's meaning.	<p>Speaker: "There are no better bananas than those grown in Hawaii."</p> <p>Listener: "So, what you're saying is that Hawaiian bananas are the best in the world."</p>
Check Perception	Deepen your ability to support and empathize by checking out "your belief" about what the speaker feels or thinks.	<p>Speaker: "Last month's revenues were worse than ever before."</p> <p>Listener: "It sounds like you are disappointed. Is that so?"</p>
Open-ended Questions	Probe for further information by asking a question that requires more than a one-word or two-word answer.	<p>"Where have you seen the problem arise?"</p> <p>"What are your ideas for tracking errors?"</p>
Body Language	Increase the comfort level of the speaker by using your body—eyes, torso, arms—in a way that is congruent with your words.	<p>To show active listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye contact • Lean forward • Open posture