

Christian Women's Job Corps® of Madison County, AL, Inc.

Active Listening



1. Listening Shows Respect

If you don't pay attention to what someone says, you send them the message that you don't value them; focus on what they have to offer; be impressed and interested, not impressive and interesting.

2. Listening Builds Relationships

By becoming a better listener, you are able to connect with others on more levels and develop stronger, deeper relationships because you are meeting a need. When you listen to someone, you take a significant step toward becoming a person of influence in his or her life.

3. Listening Increases Knowledge

Don't assume you know all of the answers; you have to listen closely to understand what the other person is trying to communicate.

4. Listening Generates Ideas

You can find out how best to help your mentee by listening to the whole situation. Don't short change yourself by jumping in too soon.

5. Listening Builds Loyalty

Practicing good listening draws people to you and they are more likely to develop a strong loyalty to you.

6. Listening is a Great Way to Help Others and Yourself

Roger Imhoff said, "Let others confide in you. It may not help you but it will surely help them." And when you help them, God helps you.

When you become a good listener, you have the ability to develop strong relationships, gather valuable information, and increase your understanding of yourself and others.

Common Barriers to Listening

- **Overvaluing Talking** – listen twice as much as you speak
- **Lacking Focus** – slow down long enough to listen, don't be thinking of what you will say next, observe body language, watch for changes in facial expression, look into the person's eyes
- **Experiencing Mental Fatigue** – dig up more energy, concentrate, and stay focused
- **Stereotyping/Prejudging** – this makes us hear what we expect rather than what another person actually says
- **Carrying Personal Emotional Baggage** – your own past experiences, both positive and negative, color the way you look at life and shape your expectations
- **Being Preoccupied with Self** – you have to step outside of yourself and your needs of the moment and focus on the other person

- ✚ **Who...**is the problem, who has the problem, who is involved, who is affected?
- ✚ **What...**exactly is the problem, what are the circumstances, what have you tried, what preceded or came after the problem, what are your options or possible solutions?
- ✚ **Where...**did it happen, where were you when the problem occurred, where are you physically/emotionally?
- ✚ **When...**did it happen, or when is it going to happen, when does it have to be solved?
- ✚ **How...**long has it existed, how are you feeling, how is it your problem, how is it affecting family, how have you handled it so far?
- ✚ **Why...**is it a problem?

Process the activity above with these points of discussion:

- ✚ When you were sharing your problem, how did it feel to be asked questions instead of receiving advice?

Our mentees deserve at least 10 minutes of us listening and asking.

- ✚ How difficult was it for you, the listener, not to give advice?

*By not problem-solving for our mentees initially,
we are communicating that they can work this out (strength-based).
Process is more important than achievement (and more difficult).*

*The questions you asked in this exercise are not exhaustive and are just starting points,
but they allow your mentee to talk about her problems, gather information, and work through the problem herself. This
results in her growth, not being told what to do.*

“You ain’t learnin’ nothin’ when you’re doin’ all the talkin’.”

A sign on President Lyndon B. Johnson’s desk

Review

*The Value of **Active Listening***

1. Listening shows _____.
2. Listening builds _____.
3. Listening increases _____.
4. Listening generates _____.
5. Listening builds _____.
6. Listening is a great way to help others and _____.

