

ACTIVE LISTENING

Summary Sheet

Active listening is a very important skill, since communication is possible only when we can listen and understand what a person is saying to us. We communicate our feelings not merely with words, but also through tone of voice, facial expression, body posture and gestures. In addition to hearing the words a person speaks to us, we can improve our communications through a clearer understanding of non-verbal expression or “body language”. Active listening enables us to clarify what a person is trying to express both through his/her words as well as his/her body language. This helps to reduce misunderstanding and tension, and assists us in solving problems.

Here is how to listen actively:-

1. Look at the person.
2. Look interested: lean towards the speaker.
3. Nod your head and say “yes” or “uh-huh” or otherwise show the speaker you are listening.
4. Ask questions to clarify what is being said.
5. Check out what you have heard the speaker say by summarising what you thought he/she said and asking “Is that what you meant?”, or “Have I got you right?” or “Is that right?”.
6. Check out what you have seen the speaker express through his body language: “You look sad to me.”
happy
angry
anxious