

Essence of active listening:

- encourage people to express opinions;
- clarify perceptions of what is said;
- restate essential points and ideas;
- reflect the speaker's feeling and opinions;
- summarize the content of the message to check validity;
- acknowledge the opinion and contribution of the speaker.

In more detail active listening is:

- Listen and don't talk; keep focus on other person. Give lots of space.
- Keep eye contact and focus. Create a listening space (you can see this from outside).
- Offer encouragement and acknowledgment by nodding or saying "uh-huh" or "I see."
- Ask open-ended questions — and questions that will elicit information you want to know.
- **Restate** basic ideas, such as "If I understand you correctly, ..." or "What you're saying is ..."
- **Paraphrase**. Repeat main ideas back. But don't interrupt — wait until the speaker's finished.
- **Summarize** the speaker's key ideas and ask if that's correct, then be willing to correct yourself.
- **Reflect** on feelings speaker is trying to convey: "Seems like that bothered you a lot ..."
- Ask for clarification. It's OK to say "I'm not sure what you said can you repeat that?."
- Pick up a pencil and paper and take notes if the topic is complicated.
- Sit down with the person. Say, "Let's sit down and talk." Shows person is important.
- Be aware of body language + facial expressions.