

1

# Guide to Effective Listening

## Listening = Connecting

### Listen TO a person:

- Focus on what they are saying
- Remain patient
- Don't interrupt
- Don't let your mind wander
- Get clarification, ask open-ended questions (that start with *what, how, or why*)
- Don't make prejudgments or assumptions
- Take notes if necessary and explain to the other person that you are taking notes about what they are saying
- Write down exact points, study them, and then come up with a response

### SHOW you are listening:

In person:

- Lean forward and make eye contact
- Display interest through facial expressions and body language

Over the phone:

- Acknowledge what they are saying
- Reassure them with small responses like: *"You're right,"* or *"I agree"*
- Repeat what they've said in your response

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2

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Display empathy:

- Put yourself in the other person's shoes
- Set aside your own emotions, thoughts, feelings or ideas
- Listen to a person within their own frame of reference
- Imagine yourself in their situation
- Respond in a way that says: *"I see what you mean"*, or *"I see how you would feel that way"*
- Empathy is understanding another person's situation, feelings, and motives

### Listen FOR information:

- Identify details that will teach you something about the speaker
- Gather thoughts and ideas
- Keep the conversation going
- Listen for information that you can use as a starting point
- Listen for signs of leadership skills
- Things you can listen FOR:
 

Marital status	Religion
Parental status	Hobbies and interests
Occupation	Prior work experience
Feelings	Ability to work well with others
Cultural background	Ability to help others succeed
Age	

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