

Notes:

Feedback

Objectives

After completing this topic, you will be able to:

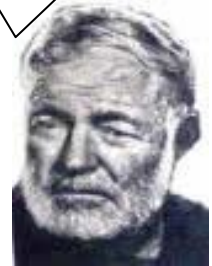
- Use active listening techniques
- Give and receive feedback effectively

When people talk,
listen completely.
Most people never
listen.

Overview

When you are busy and your attention is divided it is easy to "listen with one ear." Passive listening occurs when the receiver has little motivation to listen carefully. The results of passive listening are usually negative for the speaker and the listener. The speaker often feels ignored or diminished in some way and you miss the speaker's message. Your goal is to always be an active listener.

Active listening is used to gain information, to determine how another person feels, and to understand others.



Active Listening

- Make generous eye contact.
- Ask clarifying questions (For example, Do you mean ...). This tells the speaker that you are focused on his words.
- Ask summary questions (For example, So what you're saying is...). This allows you to present your understanding of the message to the speaker. It also allows the speaker to clear up any misunderstandings.
- Spend more time listening than talking.
- Do not finish the speaker's sentences.
- Do not answer questions with questions.
- Be aware of your biases. Don't let them flavor what you hear. You may miss out on something exciting, relevant, or important. (Simon has never been to India, so what would he know about Indian cuisine?)
- Do not become preoccupied with your own thoughts when others talk.
- Plan your response after the other person has finished speaking, not while they are speaking.
- Provide feedback that says, "I'm listening," such as a nod or smile, if appropriate.
- Take brief notes. This will force you to concentrate on what the speaker is saying.
- Active listening can be a manager's most powerful communication tool.

Notes:**Activity: Paraphrasing**

1. Break into groups of two.
2. Take 2 minutes to write down some major bullet points of a 3-minute story you want to tell. It can be the story of something cute your child did last week or this week's plot line of the soap opera you watch... just so long as the listener does not already know the story.
3. You will each take turns telling your story for 3 minutes. The listener will use active listening techniques to make sure the speaker feels heard.
4. At the end of the story, the listener will paraphrase the major points of the story back to the speaker. Did you get them right? Were you paying attention?

Giving Feedback (from ©The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention)

Feedback is a way of giving assistance by sharing observations. It is a way for the recipient to learn to what degree his or her behavior matches his or her intentions. Providing appropriate feedback is a key component of superb delivery skills.

Evaluative

Make a judgment about the worth, goodness, or appropriateness of the other person's statement or action.

- Supportive: I think that is a great idea.
- Corrective: You sure are impatient.

Prescriptive

Prescriptive feedback tells the receiver what he or she could have done, ought to have done, or should do. It is best received when solicited.

- You could have got an "A" if you'd studied more.

Descriptive

Prescriptive feedback identifies specific behaviors and provides information on the impact the behavior has had on the sender or others. Useful feedback is generally descriptive, as opposed to evaluative or prescriptive.

- You interrupted Dan three times then he stopped answering questions.

Notes:

Feedback is most effective when it:

- Describes the behavior or action that you observed
- Is non-judgmental
- Is direct, given directly to the person
- Is immediate, as soon as possible after the action
- Encourages the person to "picture" his or her behavior
- Sets out the next step for the person

These components are designed to provide information that maximizes learning and minimizes a defensive reaction on the part of the receiver.

Feedback is a learning tool, so it works best when it is intended to meet the needs of the receiver, not the sender. The less defensive the receiver is, the more he or she can hear and accept the information and consider it as a basis for improvement, or dismiss it if it has no value.

Feedback should be directed toward *behavior which the receiver can do something about*. Frustration is only increased when a person is reminded of some shortcoming over which he/she has no control.

Summary

Using the following guidelines for giving and receiving feedback can increase the learning potential. When you give feedback, make sure it is:

- **Descriptive:** Describe the behavior you observed without being judgmental.
- **Specific** (rather than general): "Your hands were in constant motion and your foot was tapping" rather than "Your nonverbals were distracting."
- **Timely:** Feedback is most effective when given shortly after the incident to be reported. However, one should be sensitive to whether the person is ready to receive the feedback at that time and place.
- **Solicited** rather than imposed: Feedback is most useful when the receiver feels the need and wants it. If you have feedback to give, ask if the person wants to hear it. If he/she doesn't, don't give it.
- **Sincere or Well-Intended:** Feedback should not be given primarily to "dump" on another. If you feel you have to say this to the other person, then ask yourself who it is you are trying to help.
- **Achievable:** Feedback should be directed toward behavior which the receiver can do something about. Frustration is increased when a person is reminded of some shortcoming over which he has no control. For example, someone with a cleft palate certainly doesn't need to hear that he or she is difficult to understand.

Notes:**eLearning Lesson: Types of Feedback**

The instructor will provide a link to an activity where you can practice identifying the types of feedback.

Receiving Feedback

The best response when receiving feedback is a simple "thank you," indicating you have heard what the person has to say and will consider it.

Steps in Receiving Feedback: I REACT

I will listen and accept without comment or being defensive.

I will also:

Reserve judgment of the "rightness" or "wrongness" of the feedback

Emotionlessly concentrate on the suggestions

Ask for alternative styles or behaviors

Clarify points I do not understand

Thank the person providing the feedback