

The importance of listening

Listening is a very important part of effective communication. A good listener can encourage their partner to talk openly and honestly.

Use our tips to make sure you are practicing good listening.



Listen and engage
actively



Open and
receptive body
language



Create the
right space



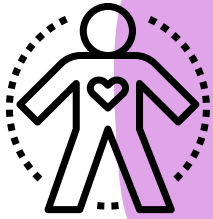
Stay focussed
and in control





Listen and engage actively

- Keep comfortable eye contact (where culturally appropriate).
- Lean towards the other person.
- Make gestures to show interest and concern.
- Listen to learn not to respond.



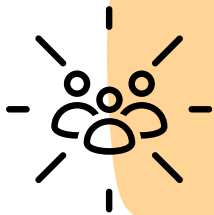
Open and receptive body language

- Have an open, non-defensive, fairly relaxed posture with your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Face the other person – don't sit or stand sideways.
- Sit or stand on the same level to avoid looking up to or down on the other person.



Create the right space

- Avoid distracting gestures, such as fidgeting with a pen or tapping your feet.
- Be aware that physical barriers, noise or interruptions will make good communication difficult.
- Mute telephones or other communication devices to ensure you are really listening.



Stay focussed and in control

- Be prepared to take time out if you are feeling really angry about something.
- It might be better to calm down before you address the issue.
- Talk using the future and present tense, not the past tense.
- Concentrate on the major problem, and don't get distracted by other minor problems.

In partnership with

