



OMBUDS OFFICE

Harvard Medical School • Harvard Dental School • Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Active Listening Techniques

Statement	Purpose	What We Do	Examples
Encouraging	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to set tone of cooperation 2. to convey interest 3. encourage the other person to keep talking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask open-ended questions - don't agree/disagree - use neutral words 	"Can you tell me more?"
Clarifying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to assist speaker in providing useful information 2. to get more information 3. to help speaker see other points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask open-ended questions - surface "yes, but..." resistance - keep asking questions until details are sufficiently clear 	"When did this happen?"
Restating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to show you heard and understood what was said 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - restate basic ideas, facts 	<p>"Let me see if I "In listening to you I think "I'm hearing you say" "It sounds like that... makes you feel..."</p>
Reflecting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to show that you understand how the person felt/feels 2. to help the person evaluate his/her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflect the speaker's basic feelings 	"You seem very upset."
Summarizing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to review progress 2. to pull important ideas, facts and feelings together 3. to establish a basis for further discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - restate major ideas expressed including feelings 	"These seem to be the key ideas you've expressed."
Validating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to show respect 2. to put into context for speaker the way their emotions affect the conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acknowledge value of their issues and feelings - show appreciation for their efforts and actions 	"I appreciate your willingness to resolve this matter."