

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Avoid reacting emotionally to positions that you disagree with.
- Follow the order “hear, understand, interpret, respond;” don’t jump from “hear” to “respond” without making sure you “understand”
- Try to pick upon on the feelings as well as the content of the message
- Focus your attention on getting and understanding someone’s meaning instead of formulating your response.
- Avoid interrupting people until they have finished making their point
- When disagreeing with someone, summarize what you think his/her position is before responding
- Ask open-ended questions to draw out a person’s thoughts and feelings by using phrases beginning with “what, how, why, describe” etc.
- Paraphrase what others have said when clarification becomes necessary
- Avoid close-ended questions that can be answered with a “yes” or a “no”
- Reflect what you think is needed to assure the speaker at the message is being received
- Use nonverbal behaviors to show that you are listening
- Attend to nonverbal behaviors to assess how a person is feeling
- Maintain good eye contact