

7 Steps to Active Listening

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1. Defer Judgement

- Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions and avoid interrupting with counterarguments.
- Listen fully without jumping in with advice or opinions.
- Don't interrupt with counter-arguments or solutions.
- Don't pitch. Listen to understand.

2. Pay Attention

- Give the speaker your undivided attention. SHOW that you're listening
- Maintain eye contact, nod occasionally, and refrain from thinking about your response while the other person is talking.
- Adopt this mindset: "I want to better understand their situation." vs. "I want to present, sell, pitch, convince..."
- Practice being truly present. Our minds tend to wander.

3. "Listen" to non-verbal cues

- Pay attention to facial expressions, tone of voice and gestures - address what their reaction
- You can do this also on the phone for example during cold calls

4. Ask Open-Ended Questions

- Encourage the speaker to expand on their thoughts and feelings.
- Example:
 - "How did you feel when that happened?" or "What are your thoughts on this approach?"

5. Respond Appropriately

- Offer thoughtful, relevant responses that address the prospect's needs and concerns
- Do not start planning what to say next
- Example: "Based on what you've shared, our solution could help streamline your integration process and provide the detailed reports you're looking for. Let me show you how..."

6. Request Clarification

- Encourage the speaker to elaborate and share more.
- Ask questions to ensure that you understand the message completely.
- Examples:
 - "Tell me more about..."
 - "Can you give an example?"
 - "Can you explain what you meant by that?"
 - "Could you provide more details about the issue?"

7. Summarize

- Summarize the speaker's main points to ensure understanding.
- Restate key points and ask if you've captured their ideas accurately.
- Reflect on what has been said by paraphrasing.
- Example:
 - "To sum up, you're concerned about the budget, timeline, and scope of the new project."

Links to Free Resources

- Active Listening Course by [Mirsea Samoila](#)
- Free Course by [Hector Sandoval](#) on Coursera
- The Art of Listening by [Simon Sinek](#)
- How to actively listen - TedX by [Scott Pierce](#)
- Active Listening: B2B Sales Strategy | [Innovation Room Podcast Ep: 22](#)
- Why active listening is a top sales skills by [Roger Martin](#)

