

Active Listening

Hearing is the passive reception of sound. Listening is giving conscious attention to something. Active listening takes this further. Active listening helps to facilitate communication with others by giving them signals about your attention and understanding. It can help your conversation partners feel more comfortable talking with you.

Acknowledging

Nonverbals to show that you do or do not understand

Reflecting

Use similar body language and emotions to the person you are talking with

Restating

Show your understanding by saying someone's point in your own words

Interpreting

Asking for more clarification or encouraging people to talk more

Being Quiet

Giving people time to think and add more to their contributions before jumping in with your own ideas

Summarizing

When someone goes off on other topics or details beyond the scope of your original question, summarize their response and then make note of other areas you want to follow-up on

Checking Perceptions

Make sure that the impressions or assumptions you are making about what is being said are correct

Probing

Ask clarification questions to make sure that you understood what they intended you to understand

Active Listening

Sample Conversation about Learning Data

I think schools need to collect better data about students. That way, they can help their students learn better.

Do you mean that you don't think schools are collecting data well now?

Well, yeah, I guess so. I don't know exactly what data schools collect, but I think they aren't collecting much more than grades and course completion. Umm....

[doesn't say anything]

More data could help faculty make better learning experiences.

[nods] Yeah, better learning is something everyone would agree is desirable.

Maybe faculty could find students who are having trouble and help them before they fail, or the school could consider making support programs that will benefit students.

So, if I'm understanding right, you are mainly concerned with professors knowing how to help students.

Hmm...that's important, but learning data can be more useful. The school could make a dashboard and show students how they are doing.

Okay, sure, a dashboard of students' own data.

Right, that would help students see how they are approaching learning compared to others and how effective that is.

Interpreting

Encourages their partner to talk more by asking for clarification and showing interest.

Being Quiet

Doesn't talk to allow their partner to say more and finish their idea.

Acknowledging

Gives a non-verbal nod to show they are listening.

Probing

Asks for clarification to make sure they understand the main point their partner is making.

Restating

Says a small part of their partner's point in their own words to show they understand the point.