

Practicing active listening

STEP 1: Be attentive to your interlocutor

- Show you are patient.
- Give up wanting to exercise control over the conversation.
- Know how to put your preconceived ideas aside in order to be open to the other person's words.

STEP 2: Ask the right questions

Vary the questions:

- Use open questions to elicit thought and reflection.
- Make use of closed questions to get them to act.
- Use upwards-oriented questions that refer to values and aspirations.
- Use downwards-oriented questions, referring to what has been done (concrete facts).

STEP 3: Allow the other person to express him or herself and give them feedback

- Do not interrupt your interlocutor.
- Avoid questioning them.
- Let them gather themselves and properly frame their ideas so they can answer clearly.

STEP 4: Identify signposting words

- Pinpoint words that give you the signal to speak again:
 - "In the end ..."
 - "Finally, in short ..."
 - "In fact ..."

STEP 5: Rephrase

Rephrasing allows you to:

- Show your interlocutor that you are present and active in the exchange.
- Validate your understanding of what has been said.
- Give your interlocutor the feeling that you understand them well.
- Give them the possibility to clarify things.
- If required, bring back their speech to a precise point.