

LISTENING SKILLS

Active, open-minded listening is essential.

GUIDELINES INCLUDE:

- Commit to understanding; paraphrase and acknowledge
- Focus on the essential message rather than detail
- Provide undivided attention; avoid interruption
- Withhold judgment; maintain an open mind

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about being an active, an open-minded listener.



QUESTIONING SKILLS



Questioning is both a way to learn and to empower others. Questions should be thoughtful and constructive.

TYPE OF QUESTIONS INCLUDE:

- Clarification questions to better understand (e.g., "Who," "What," "When")
- Probing questions to learn more (e.g., "Why")
- Scenario testing questions to explore alternatives and introduce new perspectives (e.g., "What if")
- Doubt raising questions, exploring feasibility (e.g., "How," "What about")
- Evaluation questions to assess issues, ideas and proposals.

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about asking different types of questions.



FEEDBACK SKILLS

Parties need to provide regular, constructive feedback to one another.

FEEDBACK TYPES INCLUDE:

- "I" message feedback. Use statements that begin with "I" and focus on you.
- Appropriate, relevant self-disclosure. Disclose information that is relevant to the present situation.
- Description of feelings. Try to *describe* your feelings with "I" messages rather than *expressing* them (e.g., "I get so frustrated when..." rather than "you are so inconsiderate when...").
- Perception check. Check out the feelings, thoughts, intentions, and meanings you perceive rather than assuming them to be true. This may be particularly important when interpreting nonverbal behavior.
- Behavior description - describe as accurately and objectively as possible the behavior you see that concerns you.
- Specificity via indexing and dating. Be specific about what has occurred and when it occurred.

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about providing different types of feedback.



MODELING SKILLS

We serve as models for others.

GUIDELINES INCLUDE:

- Expecting competent and collaborative communication behavior from others so we can model the behavior ourselves.
- Invite feedback and criticism of one's own behavior.
- “Meta-communicate” - talk with one another about how well you are communicating and how communication can be improved.

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about modeling desired behaviors, attitudes, and actions.



SELF-MONITORING SKILLS

Communicating well includes a heightened awareness of our own behavior.

SENSITIVITY AREAS INCLUDE:

- Semantic - monitoring the language we use and be sensitive to the others' interpretations, the meanings we intend, and the meanings others construct.
- Nonverbal - monitoring our nonverbal behaviors and be sensitive to others' interpretations of those behaviors; welcoming others' concerns about our behaviors.
- Face - monitoring our verbal and nonverbal behaviors so as to minimize threats to another party's "face."
- Cultural - monitoring our verbal and nonverbal behaviors so as to respect and be sensitive to cultural norms, values, and meanings.
- Personal identity - monitoring our verbal and nonverbal behaviors so as to minimize threats to another party's identity and sense of self.
- Stress - assessing the situation and monitoring our actions to be responsive to the stress and pressures the other party is experiencing.
- Time - assessing the situation and monitoring our actions so that we time our confrontation, feedback, and intervention constructively and appropriately.

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about modeling desired behaviors, attitudes, and actions.



DIIALOGUE SKILLS

Dialogue emphasizes mutual learning, recognition, and empowerment.

TECHNIQUES INCLUDE:

- Perspective taking - trying to understand the other person's point of view or experience thoughtfully (cognitively).
- Empathy - trying to understand the other person's experience or viewpoint emotionally (affectively).
- Mutual (other and self centeredness) - focusing on the interests of all primary parties.
- Patience and tolerance - giving people time to contemplate, speak, and respond.
- Equal opportunity/time/turns - supporting everyone's opportunity to participate.
- Acknowledgement and reinforcement - recognition for people's contributions and commitment.

ACTIVITY:

For this activity, read over the guidelines and create a role play with your group including some of the concepts about the various techniques when it comes to having dialogue with another person.

