

9 steps to responsive listening



8 years ago

“When I speak, I only know what I know. But when I listen, I also know what you know.” This quote by Tony Alessandra is apropos to any phone call or in-person meeting.

I have created a checklist that will help you be a more responsive listener.

1. Look and Lean. This should be your posture when someone is asking a question.
2. Intend to listen. Focus on the question and questioner. Don't let your mind wander or begin to answer the question before the person has finished.
3. Clarify. Engage the person to make sure you understand the question.
4. Rephrase. Restate the question, in your own words, to make sure you are both on the same track.
5. Read between the lines. Assess a person's tone of voice and facial expressions to discover a hidden message.
6. Acknowledge the questioner. Giving a compliment or adding a value to the question can help you build rapport. “You bring up an interesting point.” “That's an important aspect to consider.”
7. Empathize. Validating feelings or emotions shows your sensitivity to the person's concern. “It is frustrating, I am sure.”
8. Sad and Glad. If someone has had an unpleasant experience with your organization, tell her/him how sorry you are, and express gratitude that s/he brought it to your attention. Then explain what you will do to mollify the person.
9. Take notes. This shows your commitment to the questioner. (If on a phone call, tell the person you are taking notes.)

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