# Active Listening Techniques

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| **ENCOURAGING** | 1. To convey interest  
             2. To keep the person talking | • Avoid agreeing to disagree  
                                           • Use noncommittal words with a positive tone of voice | 1. “I see...”  
                                           2. “Uh-huh”  
                                           3. “Mmm” |
| **ELICITING** | 1. To gather relevant information  
             2. To encourage others to reveal their needs and concerns  
             3. To establish a climate of open communication | • Ask open-ended, not leading, questions  
                                           • Don’t agree or disagree  
                                           • Use noncommittal words with positive tone of voice  
                                           • Use encouraging body language, such as nodding | 1. “What is important about this for you?”  
                                           2. “Tell me more about that.”  
                                           3. “What does that mean to you?” |
| **RESTATING** | 1. To let others know that you are listening carefully and that you are trying to understand  
             2. To verify your comprehension of what they’ve said | • Paraphrase the other’s points  
                                           • Avoid value judgments or inserting your own opinions  
                                           • Ask for confirmation | 1. “What I’m hearing is...Is that correct?”  
                                           2. “Would it be correct to say...” |
| **CLARIFYING** | 1. To understand ambiguous or unclear statements  
             2. To test interpretations | • Avoid frequent interruptions  
                                           • Ask focused but open-ended questions  
                                           • Probe for fuller explanations | 1. “I’m not sure I’m following. Can you tell me more about...?” |
| **EMPATHIZING** | 1. To understand events from others’ perspectives  
             2. To show that you respect their point of view and comprehend their feelings | • Recognize others’ experiences as valid, without necessarily accepting their conclusions  
                                           • Give acknowledgement rather than agreement | 1. “It sounds like you feel...”  
                                           2. From what I’m hearing, you sound...”  
                                           3. “That must have been... for you.” |
| **SUMMARIZING** | 1. To pull important ideas and information together  
             2. To establish a basis for further discussion | • Review issues which have been raised  
                                           • Highlight the most important matters  
                                           • Set aside extraneous information | 1. “Here’s what I’ve gathered...”  
                                           2. “It seems like the key ideas are...” |
| **REFRAMING** | 1. To refocus discussion from past events to future goals  
             2. To redirect negative or adversarial statements into more productive channels | • Build on others’ ideas  
                                           • Emphasize common ground  
                                           • Use neutral or positive rather than accusatory language | 1. “They keep interrupting me!” “It sounds like you want to be heard and any path forward has to include a way for all perspectives to be included.”  
                                           2. “Since we both value ---, would it make sense to...?”  
                                           3. “What would you like to see in the future that would be different?” |