



# Listen up!

## 5 tips to help you build trust and respect

Active listening training is frequently offered to leaders and counselors to build trust, empathy, and relationships. It's a skill that can positively impact people both professionally and personally. Here are five basic tips to get started.

**Commit:** Practice listening with intention. Withhold judgement as you focus on what the other person is saying and try to understand their perspective.

**Be present:** Non-verbal cues are great ways to show that you are paying attention including your posture, eye contact, and nodding to exhibit understanding. Consider potential distractions, and consciously choose to eliminate them.

**Be respectful:** Allow a person to share their thoughts completely. Tune into their cues, and determine if you should match them. Notice if they are speaking quietly, if the conversation is private, or if they are using language to be aware of and reflect.

**Comprehend:** Ask thoughtful or clarifying questions to demonstrate your understanding and interest. Summarize what you heard, to show their message was understood correctly.

**Respond:** Once you've demonstrated that you understand the speaker's perspective, it's your turn to contribute to the conversation. Do so by acknowledging the speaker, and actively participate in the subject being discussed.

**Interesting fact:** Fidgeting is not always a sign of distraction. For some, it may be a coping mechanism to help them listen better.



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