



## Listening and Communication Tips

### 1. Maintain attentive body language

- Incline your body toward the speaker, face the other squarely at eye level, and maintain an open position.
- Stay an appropriate distance from the speaker.
- Establish effective eye contact.

### 2. Follow, don't lead

- Use a “door-opener” – non-coercive invitation to talk.
- Utilize occasional encouragement, e.g. mmm-hmm, head nods.

### 3. Inquire to learn

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Ask why this issue is important
- Ask for additional information that has not been shared

### 4. Paraphrase and reflect

- Express, in your own words, your understanding of what the speaker is saying.
- Validate how the speaker feels about what is being stated, e.g. “It sounds like you are really frustrated about this”; “If I were in your shoes I’d feel \_\_\_\_\_ too”.

### 5. Summarize and restate the main themes of the conversation

- Summarize to make sure you and the speaker have a common understanding, e.g. “I now understand your concerns about this matter, and I agree that discussing it at our next staff meeting would be the best way to bring it to everyone’s attention and get feedback on how to proceed.”