



Coaching, Evaluating and Delivering Constructive Feedback – Learning Series

Topic VII: Active Listening

Topic VII - Active Listening Scenarios Knowledge Check

Active listening demonstrates to your staff you are interested in what is being said, you understand how he or she feels, and you understand the meaning and importance of their message. Poor listening skills can damage a coaching relationship and it can be difficult to reestablish trust.

In the “**Active Listening**” topic, a number of “Keys to Active Listening” were presented. This worksheet will provide a number of scenarios. For each scenario you are asked to identify the “Key to Active Listening” that is being demonstrated or could be used to improve the coaching moment. Please refer to the “Active Listening” topic message to refresh your memory.

Note: *You do not need to submit your knowledge check; the Knowledge Check Key will be sent within the next week.*

1. **Active Listening Scenario:** Adrienne scheduled a meeting with Jasper to discuss his year-end review. During the first 20 minutes of the 30-minute meeting, Adrienne talks through the feedback she has for Jasper. She uses the last 10 minutes to explain Jasper’s rating to him. Adrienne leaves the meeting feeling as though she has communicated everything she needed to tell Jasper in a short meeting! Jasper leaves the meeting wondering what happened...

Question: Which “Key to Active Listening” could be used to improve this coaching conversation?

- a. Be present and focused
- b. Let the employee speak
- c. Suspend judgment
- d. Identify the feelings behind the words
- e. Give feedback

2. **Active Listening Scenario:** During a coaching conversation, Ahmed and Sharon have the following exchange:

Sharon: *“I am not getting along with the new guy, Dan. I’m trying my best to work with him, but I feel like I have to prepare myself for awkward exchanges and tense interactions. You’re able to work with him. How would you handle the situation?”*

Ahmed: *“It’s great that you recognize that it’s a difficult working relationship, and I appreciate that you’ve brought the situation to my attention. My recommendation is to approach the situation differently. Don’t go into conversations with Dan expecting awkward exchanges and tense interactions. Put yourself in a neutral place before you approach Dan or when he approaches you. If that doesn’t work, consider having a direct conversation with Dan about the situation. If you feel uncomfortable doing so, I’d be happy to mediate a conversation to make the working relationship more at ease.”*

Question: Which “Key to Active Listening” is being demonstrated in this coaching conversation?

- a. Be present and focused
- b. Let the employee speak
- c. Suspend the judgment
- d. Identify the feelings behind the words
- e. Give feedback

3. **Active Listening Scenario:** In preparing for her weekly check-in with Ramma, Myra reserved a conference room so they'd be free from distractions during their conversation. She shows up with a notepad and pen, but leaves her phone in her office. When Ramma joins her, Myra outlines the purpose of the meeting. While Ramma speaks, Myra is attentive and takes a few quick notes. In closing the meeting, Myra restates Ramma's key points and summarizes their next steps.

Question: Which "Key to Active Listening" is being demonstrated in this coaching conversation?

- a. Be present and focused
- b. Let the employee speak
- c. Suspend the judgment
- d. Identify the feelings behind the words
- e. Give feedback

4. **Active Listening Scenario:** Zach scheduled a meeting with Amanda to discuss an error in a report he discovered. The report has already been published – and to the Commonwealth website for all to see. When Amanda arrives at the meeting, she says, "What did you do? How did this happen? We can't have errors like this going out in our reports!"

Question: Which "Key to Active Listening" could be used to improve this coaching conversation?

- a. Be present and focused
- b. Let the employee speak
- c. Suspend the judgment
- d. Identify the feelings behind the words
- e. Give feedback

5. **Active Listening Scenario:** Jeric is meeting with Kate to discuss her goals. Kate's face is drawn, her arms are crossed, and she's leaning away from Jeric. Jeric works down the list of goals, but all Kate responds with is one-word answers – sure, yeah, okay. Something is clearly wrong, and Jeric says, "Kate, I can tell something else is on your mind. Let's put your goals aside for now and talk about it." Kate drops her arms to her sides, and shares with Jeric that she's upset that she didn't receive the promotion she was hoping for.

Question: Which "Key to Active Listening" is being demonstrated in this coaching conversation?

- a. Be present and focused
- b. Let the employee speak
- c. Suspend the judgment
- d. Identify the feelings behind the words
- e. Give feedback