



UNITE THE WORLD WITH AFRICA FOUNDATION, INC.



# ACTIVE LISTENING

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## WHAT IS ACTIVE LISTENING?

- Listening is the act of being alert and ready to hear something said by someone else.
- Listening is giving your attention to hear something.
- Active listening, therefore, is the process that requires that the listener fully pays attention, concentrates, understands, responds and then remember what is being said.



# ACTIVE LISTENING INVOLVES . . .

01

**Paying attention** through verbal and non-verbal cues such as eye-contact, nodding your head, leaning forward, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Fill in two to three additional gestures that tell you if someone you are talking to is listening actively.)

02

**Paraphrasing what has been said.** (For example you visit a nurse and explain to them that your tooth hurts when you eat. Afterwards, the nurse says “So what you’re saying is when you eat you feel pain on your tooth.”)



03

**Summarizing** the content of what the speaker was saying. In summarizing we use general phrases such as . . .

- *“Overall, it seems that...”*
- *“From what you said...”*
- *“Reviewing what you said so that we are clear....”*

04

**Interpreting.** This refers to your ability to receive the message and explain it in your own meaning or understanding. You may use statements like

- *“I get the impression that...”*

05

**Reflecting/acknowledging** feelings of the speaker by showing them that you understand how they feel.

- *“You sound so upset about it”*
- *“This has made you angry...”*

06

Always engage with the speaker by **sharing your feedback or asking questions**. Many times people listen without understanding what the speaker is saying.



# TYPES OF LISTENERS





# PEOPLE-ORIENTED LISTENER



Listeners who demonstrate people-oriented preferences show care and concern for others' feelings or emotions. They try to find areas of interest between themselves and the speaker. They often tell a personal story to calm down members who may be upset and angry. For example, an audience is crying for listening to the history of Mother Teresa or a documentary about genocide.



## **ACTION-ORIENTED LISTENER**

These listeners demonstrate action-oriented preferences when they jump ahead to get the point quickly. They give clear feedback concerning expectations. They also encourage others to be organized and get straight to the point. They don't want to beat around the bush.

## **TIME-ORIENTED LISTENER**

These listeners demonstrate time-oriented preferences when they let others know how much time they have to listen or tell others how long they have to meet. E.g. Listeners may ask how long will it take for you to finish speaking or they may even give cues to others when time is being wasted.

## **CONTENT-ORIENTED LISTENER**

These listeners test or evaluate facts and evidence. They pay more attention to technical information rather than to general information. Content-oriented listeners enjoy receiving complex or challenging information. They are very careful to evaluate information before forming an opinion about the information by asking many questions. E.g. An audience member raises his hand and asks the speaker to please give a practical example regarding this issue the speaker is presenting about. The audience member wants more evidence and real-life examples to further connect with the information.





# **BARRIERS TO ACTIVE LISTENING**



01

## **PHYSICAL BARRIERS**

Unfavorable conditions such as such as too much noise, hunger, cold, etc. can draw away the attention of listeners by making them physically uncomfortable and therefore eventually drawing away their attention.

02

## **PHYSIOLOGICAL BARRIERS**

The physical state and disabilities of listeners will affect their listening capabilities. Hearing process starts with listening and hearing disability automatically affects the listening mechanism of listeners.

03

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS**

Attitudes and behaviors of listeners can affect their ability to listen actively and attentively. E.g. If the listener does not like the speaker, he or she will be unsure about the trustworthiness of the speaker and then may not pay attention to that speaker.

04

## **LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

The use of technical terms (jargon) or unfamiliar language (including slang and/or offensive words) by a speaker can negatively affect listeners' ability to listen attentively.



# EXERCISE/DELIVERABLES

- What type of a listener are you?
- How many other types of listeners have you ever encountered
- Are you flexible enough to switch from one type of listener to another? If yes, how? And which kind of listener do you enjoy engaging with most?
- Why is it important to be an active listener?
- What barriers do you encounter when listening to your teachers in class or your friends while socializing?







# SCENARIOS



# SCENARIO #1

During a group discussion, Emma carefully listens to her classmate's explanation of a complex concept in history. Instead of interrupting or jumping to conclusions, she waits until her classmate finishes and then asks a follow-up question that shows she fully understood the explanation. This leads to a more engaging discussion, where everyone feels heard and understood.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 👉 How did Emma's classmates perceive Emma's response?
- 👉 What potential benefits did Emma give to her classmates?





## SCENARIO #2

After noticing that his friend Julia seems upset, Mark takes the time to ask her what's wrong. He listens carefully as she talks about feeling overwhelmed by schoolwork. Instead of offering solutions right away, he reflects on her feelings and says, "It sounds like you're really stressed out right now." Julia feels understood and appreciated, which strengthens their friendship.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 👉 How did Mark's active listening help Julia feel more understood and supported during a difficult time?
- 👉 Why was it important that Mark reflected on Julia's feelings instead of immediately offering solutions?
- 👉 How could Mark's approach to listening positively affect their friendship in the long term?





# SCENARIO #3

In a mathematics study group, Alex listens as his peers discuss different approaches to solving a difficult problem. By understanding each method thoroughly, he is able to suggest a hybrid solution that incorporates the strengths of multiple approaches, helping the group arrive at the correct answer more efficiently.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



How did Alex's ability to listen to different approaches help the group arrive at a more effective solution?



What role did active listening play in Alex's ability to suggest a hybrid solution?



How might Alex's actions encourage collaboration and deeper understanding within the study group?



## SCENARIO #4

As the captain of the school debate team, Aaron listens attentively to his teammates' concerns about the upcoming competition. He acknowledges their worries and incorporates their feedback into the team's preparation plan. Because of his attentive leadership, the team feels more confident and motivated, ultimately performing better in the competition.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

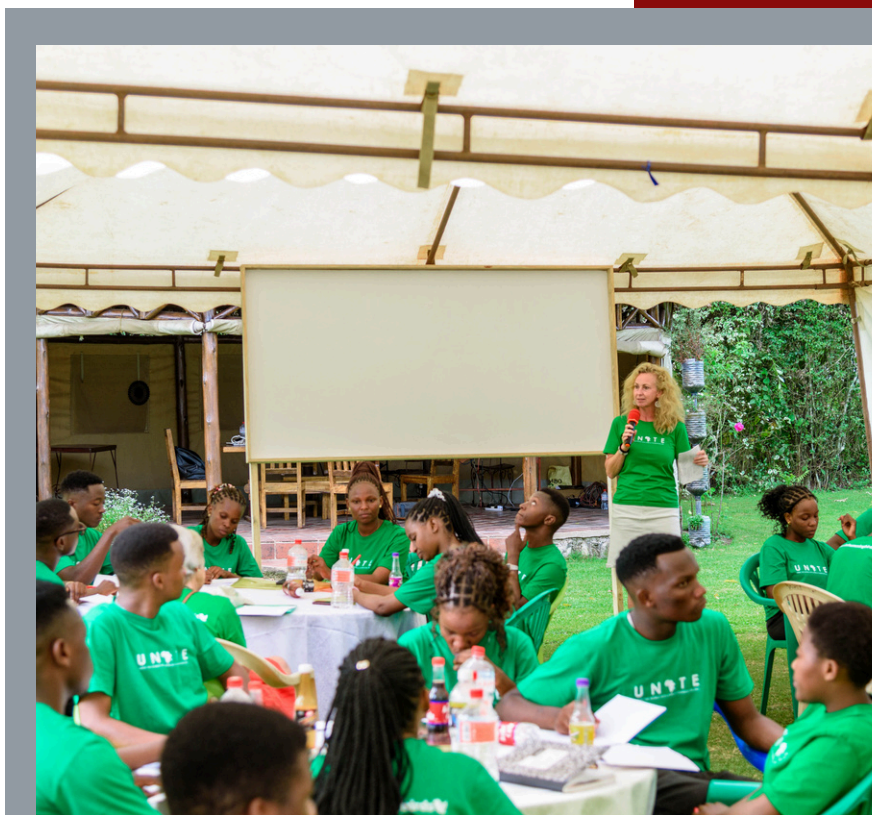
- 👉 How did Aaron's active listening to his teammates' concerns influence the team's preparation and performance?
- 👉 What benefits did the debate team gain from Aaron's attentive leadership?
- 👉 How did acknowledging his teammates' worries contribute to their confidence and motivation?





# SCENARIO #5

Two classmates, Ben and Carlos, have a disagreement over who should lead a group project. Their teacher Ms. Taylor steps in and listens to each student's concerns without interrupting. She then summarizes their points and helps them find a compromise where they can share leadership responsibilities. Both students feel their voices were heard, leading to a peaceful resolution.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Ms. Taylor's active listening help Ben and Carlos feel their concerns were respected?
- What was the effect of summarizing their points before helping them find a compromise?
- How might this approach to conflict resolution influence the classroom environment in the future?



# SCENARIO #6

In a philosophy class, Jordan listens carefully to his classmates' differing opinions on an ethical issue. Instead of sticking rigidly to his own viewpoint, he considers their arguments and modifies his stance to incorporate some of their insights. This adaptability enhances the quality of the class discussion and broadens Jordan's understanding of the topic.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 👉 How did Jordan's willingness to listen to differing opinions enhance his understanding of the ethical issue?
- 👉 What role did active listening play in Jordan's ability to modify his viewpoint?
- 👉 How might Jordan's adaptability contribute to a more dynamic and inclusive class discussion?





# SCENARIO #7

During a meeting about an upcoming exam, Liam listens carefully as his teacher outlines the key topics to study. By paying attention and asking clarifying questions, he gains a clear understanding of what to focus on and creates a study plan that prioritizes the most important areas. This allows him to use his study time efficiently and perform well on the exam.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



How did Liam's active listening during the meeting help him create an effective study plan?



What was the importance of asking clarifying questions to ensure he understood the key topics?



How might Liam's approach to active listening improve his overall academic performance?



## SCENARIO #8

At a university career fair, Emily listens attentively to a recruiter as he explains the values and goals of his company. By asking thoughtful questions and reflecting on what she hears, she makes a positive impression, leading to an invitation for a follow-up interview. Her active listening skills help her build a valuable professional connection that could benefit her future career.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 👉 How did Emily's active listening skills help her make a positive impression on the recruiter?
- 👉 What role did thoughtful questions play in building a professional connection at the career fair?
- 👉 How might Emily's active listening contribute to her future career opportunities?





BE AN ACTIVE LISTENER

**THANK YOU**

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