

Active Listening in Practice

BMBS4004 - Managing People and Teams

Learning Outcomes: Demonstrate active listening, use questioning and summarising techniques, and reflect on communication effectiveness.

Activity: Work in groups of three (Speaker, Listener, Observer). Speak for 2 minutes, listen for 2 minutes, then provide observer feedback. Rotate roles until everyone has practised.

Speaker Prompts: Positive team experience; communication problem; effective leader; situation where poor communication created confusion.

Listener - Do

- Maintain eye contact
- Give full attention
- Ask open questions
- Clarify understanding
- Summarise key points
- Encourage the speaker to continue

Listener - Avoid

- Interrupting
- Looking at your phone
- Changing the topic
- Judging or criticising
- Jumping straight to solutions

Observer Checklist	✓
Maintained attention	
Avoided interrupting	
Used open questions	
Used probing questions	
Positive body language	
Clarified understanding	
Summarised effectively	
Encouraged elaboration	
Demonstrated interest/empathy	

Useful phrases: Can you tell me more about that? • What happened next? • Could you explain that further? • So what you are saying is... • If I have understood correctly...

Reflection: Did you feel listened to? What behaviours helped? What was most difficult about listening? Which techniques worked best?

Assessment Link: In the crisis-management role play, demonstrate active listening through questioning, summarising, acknowledging others' ideas, and building agreement.

Key Takeaway: Listen to understand, not simply to reply.