



ACTIVE LISTENING & MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

MOST PEOPLE
DO NOT LISTEN
WITH THE
INTENT TO
UNDERSTAND;
THEY LISTEN
WITH THE
INTENT TO REPLY.

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Steven Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

In your experience, is it true?

Good Listening Skills

Listed below are some guidelines to look at your skills of being a good listener.
Put a “T” if True or put a “F” if False.

- _____ 1. When listening, I never assume that I know what the other person is going to say.
- _____ 2. I do not interrupt others when they are talking.
- _____ 3. I do not focus on what I am going to say while the other person is talking.
- _____ 4. I make eye contact when listening to the other person.
- _____ 5. I stop all other activities when I listen to the other person.
- _____ 6. I focus on what the person is saying while he or she is talking.
- _____ 7. I do not make judgments on what is being said.
- _____ 8. I listen carefully so the other person does not have to repeat the message.
- _____ 9. I carry on one conversation at a time.
- _____ 10. I ask questions, without interrupting, if I am not sure I understand what was said.

Do you believe you are a good listener? Why or why not?

How do you feel when you are talking to someone and you do not feel that they are listening to you?

Active Listening Exercise

As a Recovery Coach, strive to:

- Focus your attention on the subject (stop all non-relevant activities)
- Avoid distractions (a window, a talkative neighbor, noise, etc.)
- Seat yourself appropriately close to the speaker
- Acknowledge any emotional state
- Set aside your prejudices, your opinions
- Be other-directed; focus on the person communicating
- Follow and understand the speaker as if you were walking in their shoes
- Be aware: listen with your ears but also with your eyes and other senses
- Let the argument or presentation run its course, don't interrupt
- Be involved: actively respond to questions and directions, use your body position (e.g. lean forward) and attention to encourage the speaker and signal your interest

EXERCISE:

Pair up. Each of you in a pair will get a chance to be the recoveree and the recovery coach.

#1. The recoveree shall describe a family member or a friend: who the person is to them and an experience that they have gone through together. Take about 1-2 minutes.

When I give you a cue, recovery coach will then repeat to the recoveree what he/she has heard from listening to the recoveree. Talk with each other about what that was like.

When I give you a cue, switch roles and go through the exercise again.

Talk with each other about what that was like.

#2. Now, recoveree shall talk to the recovery coach and describe the main recovery capital goal that you want to achieve, why it is important and what steps you intend to do in the near future to work on it. Take about 2 minutes.

When I give you a cue, recovery coach will then repeat to the recoveree exactly what he/she has heard from listening to the recoveree. Talk with each other about what that was like.

When I give you a cue, switch roles and go through the exercise again.

Talk to each other about what that was like.

What was it like?

What was it was like to listen and repeat and what you heard?

What was it like to hear your story repeated to you?

Motivational Interviewing

The five key principles in motivational interviewing are:

- Express empathy
- Develop discrepancy
- Avoid argument
- Support Self-Efficacy
- Roll with resistance

1. Express Empathy – Identifying with the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of the recoveree
 - Communicating with respect and acceptance
 - Encouraging non-judgmental, collaborative spirit
 - Sincerely complimenting what the recoveree offers

Sample Ways to Express Empathy

- *It sounds to me like you are feeling frustrated. I can see how you might feel that way.*
- *I sense that you are wondering about your options.*
- *So, if I understand you at this point, you . . .*

2. Develop Discrepancy – when the recoveree’s statements do not match up with his/her choices or behaviors
 - Encourage recoveree’s awareness of consequences of their behavior
 - Help to identify discrepancies
 - Assist the recoveree in stating an argument for change

Sample Ways to Develop Discrepancy

- *You state that you want to _____, yet you continue to do _____. Please help me understand how your actions support your wishes.*
- *If everything you want to accomplish happens, describe to me how you would get to your goals.*
- *Let’s make a list of what’s working and what’s not working regarding your goal.*

3. Avoid Argument – trying to win a disagreement is not helpful in supporting the recoveree’s change process
 - Common mistake in coaching is arguing, blaming, proving a point and getting into power struggles – avoid these
 - Change is always up to the recoveree
 - The goal is to walk with recoverees, not drag them!

Ways to Avoid Arguments

- *We seem to disagree on this point. Help to see your view more clearly.*
 - *We may need to agree to disagree. That's OK. Let's remember this is your plan and move on.*
4. Support Self-Efficacy – believing in the recoveree's capacity for producing a desired result
- Belief in one's ability to change
 - Belief that change is possible
 - Help the development of manageable steps and plans

Sample Ways to Support Self-Efficacy

- *I believe you can do this.*
 - *You had success when you tried to do _____, let's look at how you did that.*
 - *Maybe this task seems too large. Let's break it down into manageable steps.*
 - *What encouragement from others would help you make this change?*
5. Roll with Resistance – don't fight resistance but understand it as part of the process
- Resistance is almost always a sign that the coach needs to change direction with or listen most closely to the recoveree
 - Progress is best made by meeting recoverees where they are at, not where we want them to be

Sample Ways to Roll with Resistance

- *It seems like you think this won't work for you. Let's try a different approach.*
- *Well, it is your decision. So, what should we try?*
- *It's OK that you don't believe this is possible. Tell me more so I can understand.*
- *It seems like you think this won't work for you. Let's try a different approach.*

There are four keys to motivational interviewing:

- *Ask Open Ended Questions*
- *Connect by making Affirmations*
- *Practice Reflective Listening*
- *Summarize*