

People need to feel heard. Effective listening may be the most important skill for building trust and creating a strong connection.



# LISTENING

## The case for proactive listening

Listening is a skill area fraught with high self-deception. Leaders think they listen, but those seeking to be heard tell a different story. When surveyed about the frequency of listening behaviors, managers almost always score themselves higher than their direct reports score them.

When we think of interpersonal communication, we often believe the sender of information is the influencer—making leadership and listening appear somewhat contradictory. The fact is that an effective, proactive listener is every bit as influential as the sender of the information. When leaders understand that listening is not a passive behavior, they will be more effective in managing their direct reports.

Listening is a proactive and interactive involvement with another person's ideas and feelings. It entails the use of specific verbal and nonverbal behaviors, which leaves both people with a firm sense that the words spoken were accurately communicated.

There are five fundamentals of proactive listening:

1. Attend to Nonverbal Behaviors
2. Ask Questions
3. Reflect Feelings
4. Paraphrase
5. Summarize

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understanding of the importance of listening and how it impacts competence, motivation, and confidence in developing others
- Greater understanding throughout the organization of how effective listening skills improve trust and respect between leaders and the people they lead
- Motivated and engaged employees who believe the organization cares about them and who provide better customer service, driving customer loyalty
- Understanding of how the five fundamentals of effective listening vary across the four SLII® leadership styles



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## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Individuals in a supervisory or management role

All employees within the organization

## PROGRAM FORMAT

Listening is the most important supportive behavior for developing people, building trust, and creating a meaningful connection. Effective listening reveals a person's intentions, energy, emotions, and needs, which enables the leader to practice Situational Leadership® II more effectively. Participants learn when and how to use the five fundamentals most appropriately, depending on the development level of the person being listened to and the leadership style required.

This half-day module follows Blanchard's interactive, adult-learning design for SLII® sustainability modules. The content is delivered through learner-focused exercises and facilitated discovery activities, with a minimum of lectures and didactic training.

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