

Number of methodological Tool	<b>EUPA_LO_007_M_010</b>
Work Area Code and Title	<b>2. 3 COMMUNICATION, TELEPHONE HANDLING SOCIAL AND RELATIONSHIPS</b>
Unit Code and Title	<b>2.3.1 Use of business communication skills clearly and effectively</b>
Learning Outcome Number and Title	<b>LO007: Be able to recall the main principles of effective verbal and non-verbal communication and demonstrate competence in applying these principles in a clear and effective way. Be able to perform PR activities to improve workplace relations, for example acknowledging birthdays, name days and other special occasions.</b>
Title of methodological tool	<b>LISTENERS AND NON – LISTENERS Understand how the body language works (non-verbal communication) in a clear and effective way</b>
Objective of the methodological tool	After the completion of this exercise the participants will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Understand the principles and importance of active listening</li> <li>2. Name and describe the rules of effective communication</li> <li>3. Name and describe the barriers to effective communication</li> </ol>
Individual or group exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group
Type of methodological tool	<input type="checkbox"/> Written exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Video analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Simulation <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple choice <input type="checkbox"/> Group exercise with cards <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise using ICT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role play <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Case study <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Group Work
Description of the exercise	<p><b><u>Role play part:</u></b></p> <p>This role play is divided in three (3) parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not-Listening</li> <li>2. Listening</li> <li>3. Active Listening</li> </ol> <p>The trainer asks the participants to form groups of two (2) persons.</p>

	<p>One of the participants follows the trainer outside of the classroom and is being told to make a short story and tell it later to the other member of the group.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the trainer asks the remainder of the participants to ignore the first part of the story they will listen (not-listening part).</p> <p>On the second part, when the trainer secretly gives them a sign (e.g. blinking of the eye, etc.) they should start listening ‘passively’ to their partner (paying attention, looking at them, but not disturbing - listening part).</p> <p>On the third part, when the trainer gives another sign, they should start listening “appropriately” - using nonverbal communication body language techniques and asking questions (active listening part).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review: After the exercise the first group explains how they felt during the role play, and what changes they observed in the behaviour of their partner. The partners on the other end describe what their task was and what they have been doing.</li> <li>2. Lecture The trainer explains the difference between listening and active listening and also explains active listening techniques.</li> </ol>
Exercise is accompanied by	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trainer Material</li> <li>2. Additional exercise (Face to Face Exercise)</li> </ol>
Exercise solution	<p>Understand the principles and importance of active listening. See the attached document on active listening (Trainer Material). Alternatively or additionally you can use the attached exercise, Face to Face.</p>
Other comments to the trainer	

Attachments to the Methodological Tools

## Trainers Material

The participants should not know in the beginning that the purpose of the exercise is to identify the three stages of listening (not listening - listening - active listening).

### Active listening

Is a communication technique that requires the listener to understand, interpret, and evaluate what (s)he hears. The ability to listen actively can improve personal relationships through reducing conflicts, strengthening cooperation, and fostering understanding.

When interacting, people often do not listen attentively. They may be distracted, thinking about other things, or thinking about what they are going to say next (the latter case is particularly true in conflict situations or disagreements). Active listening is a structured way of listening and responding to others by focusing attention on the speaker. Suspending one's own frame of reference, suspending judgment and avoiding other internal mental activities, are important to fully attend to the speaker.

It is important for a listener to observe the speaker's behavior and body language. Having the ability to interpret a person's body language lets the listener develop a more accurate understanding of the speaker's message. When the listener does not respond to the speaker's nonverbal language, (s)he engages in a content-only response which ignores the emotions that guide the message. Having heard, the listener may then paraphrase the speaker's words. It is important to note that the listener is not necessarily agreeing with the speaker—simply stating what was said. In emotionally charged communications, the listener may listen for feelings. Thus, rather than merely repeating what the speaker has said, the active listener might describe the underlying emotion ("You seem to feel angry," or "You seem to feel frustrated, is that because ... ?").

Individuals in conflict often contradict each other. This has the effect of denying the validity of the other person's position. Ambushing occurs when we listen to someone else's argument for its weaknesses and ignore its strengths. The purpose is to attack the speaker's position and support your own. This may include a distortion of the speaker's argument to gain a competitive advantage. Either party may react defensively, and they may lash out or withdraw. On the other hand, if one finds that the other party understands, an atmosphere of cooperation can be created. This increases the possibility of collaborating and resolving the conflict.

A four-step process (termed "Nonviolent Communication" or "NVC")—conceived by Marshall Rosenberg—can help facilitate active listening. "When we focus on clarifying what is being observed, felt, and needed [and requested] rather than on diagnosing and judging, we discover the depth of our own compassion. Through its emphasis on deep listening—to ourselves as well as others—NVC fosters respect, attentiveness, and empathy, and engenders a mutual desire to give from the heart." Rosenberg further clarifies the intricacy of perception and adaptiveness of what he calls "deep listening" by saying, "While I conveniently refer to NVC as a 'process' or 'language,' it is possible to express all four pieces of the model without uttering a single word. The essence of NVC is to be found in our consciousness of these four components, not in the actual words that are exchanged."

To enhance your listening skills, you need to let the other person know that you are listening to what he or she is saying. To understand the importance of this, ask yourself if you've ever been engaged in a conversation when you wondered if the other person was listening to what you were saying. You wonder if your message is getting across, or if it's even worthwhile continuing to speak. It feels like talking to a brick wall and it's something you want to avoid.

Acknowledgement can be something as simple as a nod of the head or a simple "uh huh." You aren't necessarily agreeing with the person, you are simply indicating that you are listening. Using body language and other signs to acknowledge you are listening also reminds you to pay attention and not let your mind wander.

You should also try to respond to the speaker in a way that will encourage him or her to continue speaking, so that you can get the information you need. While nodding and "uh huhing" says you're

interested, an occasional question or comment to recap what has been said communicates that you understand the message as well.

### **Becoming an Active Listener**

There are five key elements of active listening. They all help you ensure that you hear the other person, and that the other person knows you are hearing what they say.

#### **1. Pay attention.**

Give the speaker your undivided attention, and acknowledge the message. Recognize that non-verbal communication also "speaks" loudly.

- Look at the speaker directly.
- Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
- Avoid being distracted by environmental factors.
- "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
- Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

#### **2. Show that you are listening.**

Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.

- Nod occasionally.
- Smile and use other facial expressions.
- Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like "yes" and "uh huh".

#### **3. Provide feedback.**

Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.

- Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is..." and "Sounds like you are saying..." are great ways to reflect back.
- Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say....?" "Is this what you mean?"
- Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.

#### 4. **Defer judgment.**

Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message.

- Allow the speaker to finish.
- Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

#### 5. **Respond Appropriately.**

Active listening is a model for respect and understanding. You are gaining information and perspective. You add nothing by attacking the speaker or otherwise putting him or her down.

- Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Treat the other person as he or she would want to be treated.

### **Active Listening Techniques**

#### **Open questions**

Rather than asking questions which only require a yes or no answer, try and ask open questions. For example, instead of saying: 'Has this been going on a long time?', ask 'How long has this been going on?'. That way, instead of closing the conversation down into a yes or no response, you open it out and encourage the other person to keep talking. Another good example to remember is instead of saying "is everything ok?" you can ask "how are things going?".

## Summarising

This helps to show that you've listened to, and understood, what's been said. For example, 'I understand you are feeling very stressed, but remember you love your job.'

## Reflecting

Repeating back a word or phrase can encourage people to go on. If someone says, 'So it's been really difficult recently,' you can keep the conversation going simply by repeating 'Difficult...!'

## Clarifying

We all skirt around or gloss over the most difficult things. If we can avoid saying them, we will. If the person you're speaking with glosses over an important point, saying 'Tell me more about...', or '...sounds a difficult area for you' can help both of you clarify the points. It sounds obvious, but a 'Yes', 'Go on', or 'I see' can really give some much needed encouragement.

## Reacting

You do not have to be completely neutral. If whoever you are talking with has been having an absolutely dreadful time, some sympathy and understanding is vital. 'That must have been difficult' – this really helps.

## Additional exercise (if there is time)

### 2. Face to Face Exercise

This exercise requires your full concentration and attention. Sit face to face with a partner. First observe the facial expression, the mood, the gaze of the other person. Then ask your partner to give you a sentence for you to reflect back to him.

Your partner tells you a sentence or two. You listen, understand, think about it and reflect it back to your partner using *your own* words.

Ask your partner if you reflected the message correctly. Ask him if you were in tune with his feelings and mood. If you successfully completed this exercise, your (reflective) listening will make your partner feel that you have *listened* and that they have been *understood*.

Sit face to face with someone else. Your partner says a short sentence, you listen to it, and render it back using similar words and sentence structure. Rearrange words or substitute words to give the message back to you partner. Ask the speaker if the message is still the same. Ask your partner if you were able to paraphrase or if you are just repeating. If the speaker tells you that you are just repeating, dare to move words around and to replace them with synonyms until you can successfully paraphrase what your speaker said.

Take turns with your partner, practice this paraphrasing exercise until you both feel you are good at paraphrasing a message.