



Listen to Support Learning

Objective: Mentors, who listen to their Mentees, know what relevant knowledge or perspective to share. Mentees, who listen, learn from discussions with their Mentors.

Pair Exercise: Focused Listening

1. Mentee: Prepares to talk for 3 uninterrupted minutes about...

- A problem or opportunity in your current work where you think your Mentor could give you new insight. You could focus on a task where you are not sure what to do next or a decision you are having difficulty making.

2. Mentor: Asks...

- “Tell me about a problem, opportunity or challenge you are currently having and tell me everything you think I need to know to help you to move towards a solution. I will listen to you for 3 uninterrupted minutes.”

3. Mentee: Talks for 3 uninterrupted minutes...

- Explains the issue by giving background about what has happened so far, the steps taken so far and asks for insights and suggestions.

4. Mentor: Listens intently without interrupting...

- Writes down questions, tracks the time and ends the exercise at 3 minutes.

5. Mentor asks clarifying questions...

- To support the Mentee in developing a solution.
- Ask “What?” and “How?” probing questions instead of “Why?”

Listening Follow Up – Problem Solve

Effective Mentors support problem solving, instead of giving answers. Ask questions to help the Mentee develop a solution to the issue presented in the 3-minute listening exercise.

Use probing questions:

- Ask - What? How? When? If you could...? (See Probing Questions tip sheet)

Mentors & Mentees:

- Discuss solution as much as time permits. If you want, continue this discussion at your next meeting.