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# Communication Skills

## Developing Effective Communication Skills



### TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Talking and communication are not the same! There are three basic skills for communication: listening, looking, and leveling.

#### LISTENING

Listening does not have to be passive. It can be as active as talking, if you do it right. To listen effectively, you should:

- Pay attention.
- Not think ahead to what you are going to say (ignoring the speaker while rehearsing your own comments).
- Not interrupt.
- Listen for feelings underneath the words.
- Keep an open mind- don't judge immediately.
- Encourage the speaker to continue and clarify what has been said.

#### LOOKING

People communicate with both verbal and body language. Pay to the whole person. Take note of facial gestures and body movements. There are clues that will help you more fully understand what the person is saying. Some helpful tips:

- Make eye contact.
- Show that you are listening by leaning forward, saying “uh-huh” or “go on”.
- Check out what you are understanding; repeat back what you heard. Ask if that’s what the mentee “said”.

#### LEVELING

Leveling means being honest about what you are feeling and thinking. Tips include:

- Be honest in what you say.
- Speak for yourself. Use “I” statements instead of “you” statements.
- Deal with the other person’s feelings. Don’t give unwanted advice or try to change the other’s feelings. Just listen and try to understand.