

Suggested Phrases to Demonstrate Active Listening

Statement Type	Purpose(s)	To do this	Examples
ENCOURAGING	To convey interest and encourage the other person to keep talking	Don't agree or disagree; Use neutral words; Use varying voice intonations	"Can you tell me more..."
CLARIFYING	To help you clarify what is said To get more information	Ask questions; Restate wrong interpretation to force speaker to explain further	"Are you saying ...?" "Would you say more about that?" "What does that look like?"
RESTATING	To show you are listening & understanding what is being said To check your meaning & interpretation	Restate basic ideas, facts	"I thought I heard you say..." "So you would like to know more about reading strategies. Is that right?" "We may need to check this out further..."
REFLECTING (verbal)	To show that you understand how the other person feels	Reflect the speaker's basic feelings	"You seem quite passionate about this idea."

SUMMARIZING	To review progress; To pull important ideas, facts, & feelings together; To establish as basis for further discussion	Restate major ideas expressed including feelings	"These seem to be the key ideas you have expressed..." "What I hear you saying is ..." "Is it about ...?" "Let me make sure I understand you ..."
VALIDATING	To acknowledge the worthiness of the other person	Acknowledge the value of their issues & feelings; Show appreciation for their efforts & actions	"We appreciate your willingness to delve into this difficult issue." "I think I understand why you'd be confused."
BUILDING	To help build & continue the discussion To offer other opinions	Ask questions; Offer ideas or suggestions	"Have you considered..."
REFLECTING (nonverbal)	To convey the speaker's nonverbal message To clarify the message of the nonverbal message	Verbalize the speaker's body language &/or facial expression	"I've just been noticing that when you talk about your conclusions, you smile. That makes me think you're comfortable with the direction."