

## **HANDOUT: CORE PRINCIPLES OF ACTIVE LISTENING**

**Below are four core principles of active listening.**

### 1. Physical Attention

- Face the person who is talking.
- Notice the speaker's body language; does it match what he/she is saying?
- Can you match the speaker's body language?
- Try not to do anything else while you are listening.

### 2. Paraphrasing

- Show you are listening and understanding what is being said.
- Check the meaning and your interpretation.
- Restate basic ideas and facts.
- Check to make sure your understanding is accurate by saying:  
“It sounds like what you mean is... Is that so?”  
“So what happened was... Is that correct?”

### 3. Reflecting

- Show that you understand how the person feels.
- Help the person evaluate his or her feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else.
- Reflect the speaker's feelings by saying:  
“Are you saying that you're angry/disappointed/glad, because...?”  
“It sounds like you feel...”

### 4. Clarifying

- Help clarify what is said.
- Get more information.
- Help the speaker see other points of view.
- Use a tone of voice that conveys interest.
- Ask open-ended questions, as opposed to yes/no questions, to elicit more information.

### 5. Encouraging

- Show interest by saying  
“Can you tell me more about that?”  
“Really?”  
“Is that so?”