

# Listening

## The Case for Proactive Listening

Leaders often say they love the skill of listening. But listening is a skill area wrought with high self-deception. Leaders think they listen, but those seeking to be heard tell a different story. When surveyed about the frequency of listening behaviors, managers almost always score themselves higher than the direct reports score the managers.

When we think of interpersonal communication, we often think that the sender of information is the influencer—making leadership and listening appear somewhat contradictory. The fact is that an effective, proactive listener is every bit as influential as the sender of the information. When leaders understand that listening is not a passive behavior, they will be more effective in managing their direct reports.

The premise for this half-day listening program is that *listening is a proactive and interactive involvement with another person's ideas and feelings*. It entails the use of specific verbal and nonverbal behaviors, which leaves both people with a firm sense that the words spoken were accurately communicated.

There are five fundamentals of proactive listening:

1. Attend to Nonverbal Behaviors
2. Ask Questions
3. Reflect Feelings
4. Paraphrase
5. Summarize

### Listening to the SLII® Connection

Blanchard® research reveals that listening is the most important supportive behavior for developing people, building trust, and creating a meaningful connection. Effective listening reveals a person's intentions, energy, emotions, and needs, which enables the leader to practice Situational Leadership® II more effectively. Participants learn when and how to use the five fundamentals most appropriately, depending on the development level of the person being listened to and the leadership style required.

### Audience

Individuals in a supervisory or management role; all employees within the organization

### Program Format

This half-day module follows Blanchard's interactive, adult-learning design for SLII® sustainability modules. The content is delivered through learner-focused exercises and facilitated discovery activities with a minimum of lectures and didactic training.

### Outcomes

- Empowered listeners who understand the importance of listening and how it impacts their competence, motivation, and confidence in developing others
- Greater understanding throughout the organization of how effective listening skills improve trust and respect between leaders and the people they lead
- Motivated and engaged employees who believe the organization cares about them
- Increased understanding of how the five fundamentals of effective listening vary across the four SLII® leadership styles
- Inspired employees who provide better customer service, thus driving customer loyalty

For more information, please contact your Blanchard Sales Associate at 800 728-6000 or 760 489-5005.



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