

## Active Listening compared to Our Usual Way of Listening

Active Listening	Our Usual Way of Listening
repeat back in their own words what you hear, you understand	<b>X</b> give your version of the story
don't talk about yourself	<b>X</b> give your opinion, advice, experiences
focus on the speaker, don't react or make personal comments	<b>X</b> be thinking about what to say next, change the topic if it's hard or uncomfortable
let the speaker lead the conversation	<b>X</b> act like you know everything about the topic
ask for clarification, let them correct your feedback	<b>X</b> make assumptions to fill in the gaps, don't let them 'catch you' in error or wrong
don't advise, let them come to their own conclusions	<b>X</b> give them advice and your answers
acknowledge their feelings, but don't diagnose, falsely reassure or criticise	<b>X</b> reassure them, <i>'it's not so bad ...'</i> or talk them out of their experience
reflect back what you hear to check your understanding, and so the speaker can hear their own words	<b>X</b> make sure you fix, change or improve what they say, especially if you're right
support their feelings, for example <i>'you feel pretty hopeless about that, don't you ...'</i>	<b>X</b> agree with their generalisations, <i>'yes, I dare say, it is hopeless!'</i>
Allow silences. Breathe.	Fill silences. Call attention to something in the environment

# Active Listening Guidelines

How to prepare yourself for active listening and characteristics/behaviour

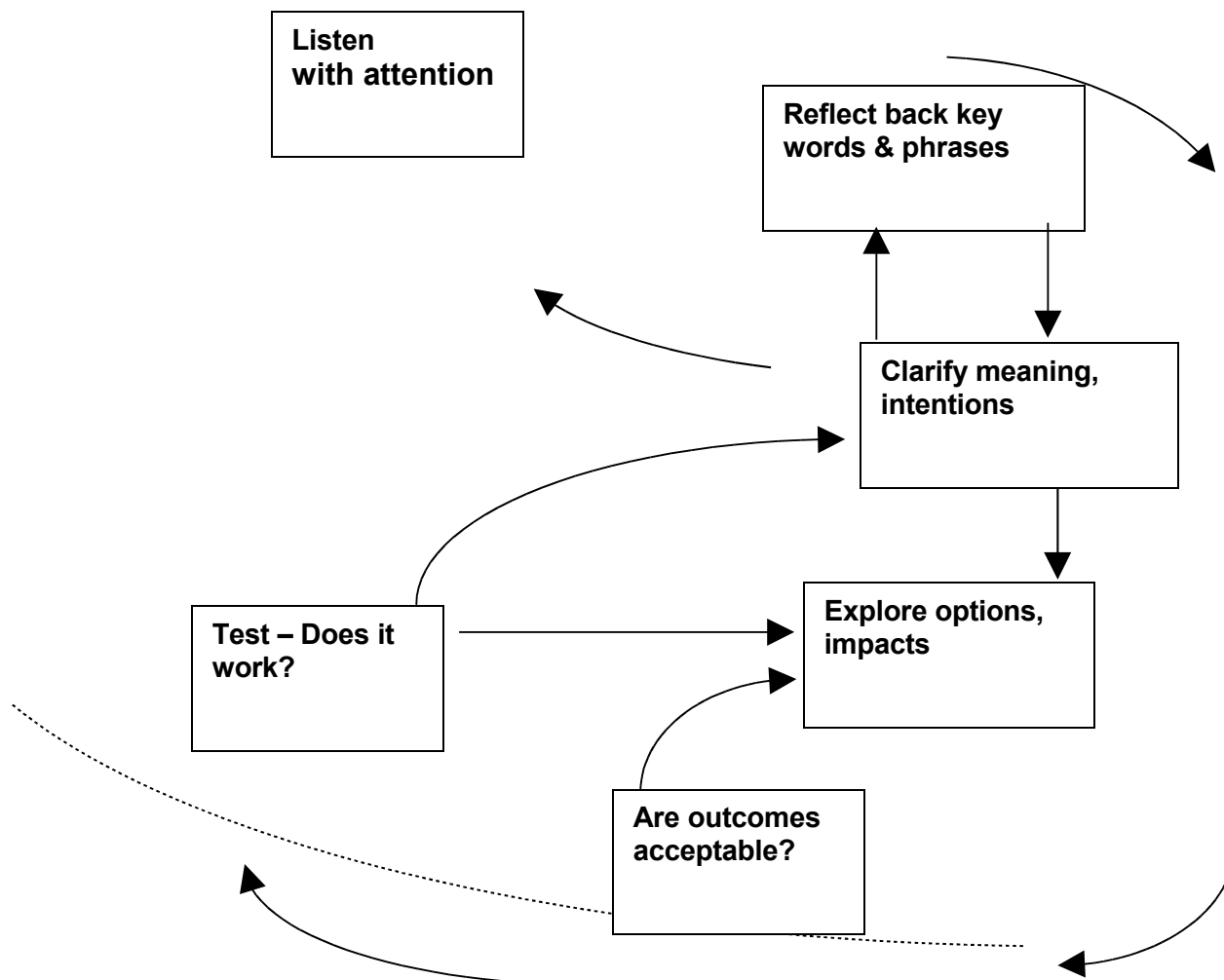


- Quiet your own thoughts
- Minimise distractions
- Listen with open mind, eyes and ears
- Listen for meaning (take the layers away)
- Put your attention on the speaker
- Observe body language

**Keep the Active Listening tips overleaf in mind and try to frame your comments with ...**

encouragement	<i>Tell me more ... What happened then?</i>
summaries of what you've heard	<i>So you're saying ....., is that right? First you ... and next you ... , is that right?</i>
checking back with the speaker	<i>How did that make you feel? You seem pretty upset/happy/scared. What did you think when that happened?</i>
a break down of generalisations	<i>When you say 'everyone', who exactly is <u>everyone</u>? You say you hate 'this', what is <u>this</u>?</i>
acknowledgement of their experiences, feelings (both verbally and non-verbally)	<i>nodding, open body language, appropriate eye contact, express empathy: 'That must have been hard'</i>

## Active Listening Model for Facilitating Group Discussion



**Listen with attention** – Hush your own thoughts and put your attention on the speaker  
**Reflect back key words & phrases** – Repeat what you hear so the speaker can hear their own words  
**Clarify meaning, intentions** – breakdown generalisations and get clarity about main points  
**Explore options, impacts** – discuss ways forward and their consequences  
**Test – Does it work?** Is it what you expected?  
**Are outcomes acceptable?** --Can everyone live with the result?  
**Repeat steps as necessary** – goal is mutual understanding and an agreement that everyone can live with (consensus)