

ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS SKILLS

Watch your Body Language

Your body language says a lot about how you are feeling. Stand with your arms crossed and you may look impatient. Tapping your foot while someone else is speaking is a possible sign that you can't wait for them to finish. Instead, try to use encouraging body language:

- › Position yourself so you're facing the person you are speaking with.
- › Look at them calmly and openly. Don't roll your eyes if you disagree with something they say!
- › Offer clues that show you are listening in an ongoing way. You can say "mhm" every so often or nod your head.

Re-State Key Points

Re-stating key points can be a good way to show that we care about what someone is saying to us - and to make sure we have truly understood what they are saying. Use your own words to recap the main point or points the other person just made and check if you have understood correctly.

Listen More

Try to listen more – a lot more – than you speak. A good goal to aim for is to listen 80% of the time and speak 20%. This may not always be possible, and for some people it may be difficult, but it is worth trying to achieve. It forces you to slow down your thoughts and really take in what the other person is saying.

Listen Rather than Wait to Speak

When someone is speaking (especially if they are saying something you disagree with), it is easy to mentally argue with them or start thinking about how to counter their points. Try to avoid doing this. When you are thinking about what you're going to say next, you're not really listening.

Ask Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions are questions that cannot be answered with a yes or no. They are a great way to keep conversations going and encourage people to share information with you and show that you are interested in what the other person is saying.

Here are some examples of open-ended questions:

- › So, what do you think about that?
- › How does/did that make you feel?
- › What do you think a solution is?

Sometimes you can use a statement instead of an open-ended question. For example:

- › That must have been tough.
- › I can only imagine what you felt like.

Reflect Emotion

Reflecting Emotion is a bit like re-stating key points, only what you are doing is identifying how the speaker feels.

