



The Cycle of *Active Listening*™

Action Planning Guide
with **bonus quiz**

"What can YOU do to elevate the
workplace experience for everyone?"

Heather R YOUNGER

The Art of Active Listening Guide

Take the Self Assessment

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely well).

STEP 1 - Recognizing the Unsaid

1. How well can you identify key indicators that someone may be holding back or not fully expressing their thoughts during a conversation?
2. How effective are you at actively listening to identify the unsaid or implicit messages in a conversation?
3. How well do you understand and interpret body language and nonverbal cues to recognize what is not being said verbally?
4. How aware are you of cultural differences and how they can affect the way in which the unsaid is communicated and understood in a conversation?

Your score: _____ out of 20

ACTION ITEM:

Make a conscious effort to observe and note nonverbal cues during conversations, such as facial expressions, gestures, and posture. Reflect on what those cues might be indicating about the person's feelings or thoughts, and try to incorporate that understanding into the conversation.

This could be achieved by making it a habit to regularly pay attention to nonverbal cues, to reflect on the observations, and over time it would be an integral part of your listening process.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely well.)

STEP 2 - Seek to Understand

1. How well do you actively seek to understand the other person's perspective and feelings during a conversation?
2. How well do you identify and overcome common barriers to understanding others?
3. How well do you identify and acknowledge your own biases and assumptions when trying to understand others?
4. How well do you use active listening techniques to understand the other person's point of view?

Your score: _____ out of 20

ACTION ITEM:

Practice empathy in all conversations. Try to understand the other person's perspective, feelings, and where they are coming from. Reflect on your own biases and assumptions, and ask questions to gain a deeper understanding of the other person.

It's important to make it a habit to practice this, be patient with oneself and others while working on this action item, and reflect on the progress made. With time, this will become an integral part of the listening process, and will help foster more positive and productive interactions with others.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely well.)

STEP 3 - Decode

1. How well can you accurately decode the verbal and nonverbal messages being communicated during a conversation?
2. How aware are you of how your own emotions and biases affect your ability to decode a message?
3. How well do you use active listening techniques to improve the ability to decode messages without reacting too quickly to feedback without reflecting on what we heard?
4. How well do you use reflection on previous conversations and interactions to improve the ability to decode messages in the future?

Your score: _____ out of 20

ACTION ITEM:

Practice active listening and pay close attention to both verbal and nonverbal cues during conversations. Try to identify the main idea, feeling and intent behind the message, look for patterns and structure in the message. Reflect on the conversation and try to identify any biases or assumptions that might have influenced your understanding. Include others in your decoding and research the feedback you received.

It's important to note that this is an ongoing effort. Keep working on improving decoding skills, monitor your progress, and reflect regularly for improvement.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely well.)

STEP 4 - Act

1. How well can you effectively respond to and act on the information being communicated during a conversation?
2. How well do you handle misunderstandings or unclear communication during a conversation?
3. How well do you uncover what action is expected of you after listening to someone?
4. How well do you use reflection on previous conversations to help you decide what to act upon?

Your score: _____ out of 20

ACTION ITEM:

Practice active listening and pay close attention to both verbal and nonverbal cues during conversations. Try to identify the main idea, feeling and intent behind the message, look for patterns and structure in the message. Reflect on the conversation and try to identify any biases or assumptions that might have influenced your understanding. Include others in your decoding and research the feedback you received.

It's important to note that this is an ongoing effort. Keep working on improving decoding skills, monitor your progress, and reflect regularly for improvement.

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely well.)

STEP 5 - Close the Loop

1. How well can you effectively confirm and summarize the key points of a conversation to close the loop on what was heard?
2. How well do you ensure that all parties are on the same page before ending a conversation?
3. How well do you set proper expectations for someone providing you feedback about exactly when you will respond to their request?
4. How well do you consistently connect the dots for someone concerning their feedback to you and the actions that you take in response to that feedback?

Your score: _____ out of 20

ACTION ITEM:

Make it a habit to confirm the message by paraphrasing, rephrasing, or restating the key points. Check for understanding by using open-ended questions, feedback and active listening techniques. Reflect on the conversation and confirm that all parties are on the same page before ending it, addressing any remaining questions or concerns. Go back to the original person with the message to ensure that the information received is accurate and if there's any clarification needed. Don't forget to provide the other party with a timeframe regarding when they will hear back from you on their request or concern. Thank them for their feedback.

It's important to make it a habit and practice regularly, monitor progress and reflect on the conversations, this will improve the overall communication and create more productive interactions.

GET YOUR SCORE

Now, add up your score in each of the five areas:

STEP 1 - Recognizing the Unsaid ___ points

STEP 2 - Seek to Understand ___ points

STEP 3 - Decode ___ points

STEP 4 - Act ___ points

STEP 5 - Close the Loop ___ points

YOUR TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 100: _____

It's important to make it a habit and practice regularly, monitor progress, and reflect on the conversations. This will improve overall communication and create more productive interactions.

THE ART OF *Active Listening*

How People At Work Feel
Heard, Valued & Understood



**PRE-ORDER
YOUR COPY
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PRAISE FOR THE BOOK



"Most of us don't *listen* nearly as often, or as well, as we think we do—or as well as others wish we would.

The Art of Active Listening reveals the secret to developing this priceless skill.

MORAG BARRETT | Executive coach and bestselling author



"This is the *blueprint* to create a culture of listening at work.

One that will ensure those in your care know you've heard them, and will inspire them to respond with more loyalty."

GARRY RIDGE | "The Culture Coach" , Chairman Emeritus at the WD-40 Company.



"Failing to listen is probably the *biggest expense* to leaders and sales professionals today.

Heather brings focus to this fact and, more importantly, delivers us the mindset and skill set to make active listening our superpower."

PHIL M JONES | Bestselling Author of "Exactly What to Say"