

“Active Listening and Active Inquiry: Effective Supervisory Tools for Leaders”

AGA Trenton Chapter

Fall Seminar

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Mercer County Community College

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Agenda

- Dispel Myths of Active Listening and Active Inquiry
- Develop basic listening and inquiry techniques to improve work relationships with employees
- Create Follow-up Protocol to hold Self and Employees Accountable
- Provide timely evaluations and improvement tracking to demonstrate growth and effectiveness
- Discuss The EmPathic Institute Training Program
- Free Supervisor's Meeting Checklist

Introductions

- Who am I?
- Who are You?
- Why are you here?

Dispelling Myths about Active Listening

Myth: there is very little validity in the use of Active Listening

According to Skillsyouneed.com, 2019:

Active listening involves **listening** with all senses. As well as giving full attention to the speaker, it is **important** that the '**active** listener' is also 'seen' to be **listening** - otherwise the speaker may conclude that what they are talking about is uninteresting to the listener.

Active listening is a **technique** that is used in counseling, training, and solving disputes or conflicts . It requires that the listener fully concentrate, understand, respond and then remember what is being said.

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active listening](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Active_listening) accessed March, 2019.

IMPACT OF ACTIVE LISTENING AND ACTIVE INQUIRY

- Earns Trust and Respect of Peers
- Understand Issues and Formulate Better Solutions
- Diffuse Conflict
- Develop Better Relationships with subordinates and supervisors at all levels
- Mission driven work approach
- Manage change effectively

Dispelling Myths of Active Listening

Myth: Active Listening can not be demonstrated.

Ways to show Active Listening:

- Demonstrating concern.
- Paraphrasing to show understanding.
- Nonverbal cues which show understanding such as nodding, eye contact, and leaning forward. Brief verbal affirmations like “I see,” “I know,” “Sure,” “Thank you,” or “I understand.”

Oct 24, 2018 – The Balancecareer.com

When is Active Listening Appropriate in the Workplace?

Active Listening is appropriate when:

- Opportunity to bring clarity to an issue
- Relationships need improvement up, down, across the organization
- Teamwork needs improvement
- Productivity needs improvement

Active Listening IS NOT appropriate when:

- Unable to pay attention
- Not Listening
- Passing Judgement
- Respond Inappropriately

(Mindtools.com, 2019).

When is Active Inquiry Appropriate in the Workplace?

Active Inquiry is appropriate when:

- Parties are open to learn from anyone and anything.
- There is agreement of intent in the session.
- Inform the person/staff you are going to be conducting Active Inquiry.

Active Inquiry IS NOT appropriate when:

- Fixing – just giving answer
- Knowing the answer and manipulating – asking just to get them to an answer what you want
- Interrupting – **SILENCE IS GOLDEN**
- Being Distracted – noise, location
- Stacking Questions – more than 1 at a time
- Checklisting- prior set of questions

How can I apply Active Listening and Inquiry to my work as a manager?



Press Pause:

What is resonating with you at this moment?

How do you see these practices related to the work you do?

What impact can this approach bring to your work?

Techniques – Active Listening

- Active Listening can be used in a variety of settings: Work, Personal, Social, etc.

LETS PRACTICE!!!!!!!!!!

- Listen with intention – be present in the now
 - Acknowledge other's conversation
 - Summarize what you have heard
 - Ask for verification and permission when asserting recommendations etc.
- Activity: break into groups of two. One person shares their case regarding a supervisory issue.
 - The other participant's job is to actively listen – **ONLY LISTEN!!!**
 - In 1 to 3 minutes – the listening partner will summarize what he or she heard.
 - The speaking partner will confirm what was summarized.

Techniques – Active Inquiry

- Active Inquiry can be used to ask high powered questions to drive a person forward

LET'S PRACTICE!!!!!!!

- Listen with intention – be present in the now
 - Ask probing high powered questions that are action driven
 - Summarize what you have heard
 - Ask for verification and permission when making assertions
- Activity: break into groups of two. One person shares their case regarding a supervisory issue.
 - The other participant's job is to actively listen
 - And, Actively Inquire – **ASK QUESTIONS utilizing the 6 most important questions to ask in a coaching session** (Neilich. The Way to Coach, 2016).
 - These 6 Questions set the environment for a coaching session.

Active Inquiry – 6 Most Important Questions to Ask

- What would be the most valuable outcome you can achieve in our session?
- What are your ideas to find solutions?
- What are your insights so far?
- What would you like to discuss now?
- What are next steps?
- What was most valuable for you today?

Examples of High Powered Open- Ended Questions

- What are your thoughts on the issue?
- How do you envision the issue getting resolved?
- When would you like to have this issue resolved?
- Where might you go to find ideas?
- What else can you do?
- What don't you want to have happen in this situation?
- How can you move forward?

If you get stuck:

- Ask the speaker to say more about that point – to gain clarification?
- Tell me about a time when you were successful solving an issue like this? What lessons can you apply to your current situation?
- How important is this issue to you?
- If you were getting advice from someone you respected, what would they tell you?

Examples of High Powered Open-Ended Questions

- What are your ideas on the issue?
- If you had to make a decision right now, what would it be?
- Where do you want to start making progress?
- What strengths can you bring to bear on this problem?
- Who do you need to influence to make progress here?
- *If you were in my shoes, what would you want me to ask you?
- What is the other person's perspective on this issue?

Creating Personalized Follow Up and Accountability

How will you follow up with your staff once an issue is addressed?

What key areas will you focus on as part of the follow up?

What does accountability look like?

What are you responsible for?

What is your staff responsible for?

What happens if accountability is not met?



Develop An Evaluation Method: Improvement and Ongoing Assessment

Conduct at Minimum an Annual Review – increase review to every 6 months if needed.

(Utilize the probationary period to teach, coach, mentor, and correct).

Are there **360 reviews** – how will you know if you are NOT doing a good job?



What positives will you celebrate with your staff?

GIVE POSITIVE EVALUTIONS TOO!!

THE BEST TEAMS ARE LED BY LEADERS WILLING TO SERVE FIRST!!!! WHO ARE OPEN TO GIVE AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK FAIRLY – Aaron W. Chavis, MPA

What professional development will you offer your staff? Will you seek for yourself?

EmPathic Institute

“Through empathy, we make meaningful change.”

Strategic Advisor who provides nonprofit executives and other social entrepreneurs in the Tri State region assistance in the development of people, organizations, and communities by providing strategic solutions to build high performing individuals, teams and operations.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- One-on- One Coaching
- Group Coaching
- Leadership Groups
- Workshops, Seminars, Training, & Facilitation
- Retreats – Strategic Planning & Succession Planning

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- Check site for my **EmPathic Institute** starting in January 2020: leadership program that couples **Empathy and Emotional Intelligence with 12 best practice management tools to help managers, executives, and other social leaders solve organizational problems.**

WRAP UP

IMPACT:

- Active Listening and Active Inquiry are powerful tools that can help build high performing employees and teams; especially as a tool for supervision, it can transform employees into strategic, results driven, problem-solvers?

THOUGHTS:

- I hope that the material was relevant and met your needs today – what insights do you have about this approach?
- What is 1 thing you can take away from our session that will add value to your work?