

Exercise: How Well Do You Listen? Time: 40 Minutes

Purpose: To introduce techniques for enhancing the listening process.

Materials: None

Instructions:

1. *Tell participants that in this session we will be examining our own skills in listening to what others say.*
2. *Divide the group into pairs (preferably with someone they do not know well).*
3. *Instruct the participants that each person in the pair will have 2- minutes to speak on any topic of his/her choice. The other will listen.*
4. *Instruct the listener to pay attention and not interrupt.*
5. *Let the group know when it is time to switch.*
6. *Ask the speakers to leave the room so you can address the listeners in private.*
7. *Instruct the listeners to act disinterested in what the speaker has to say. Have them interrupt and not look the person in the eye.*
8. *Invite the speakers back into the room and repeat the exercise, switching roles.*
9. *After each has had a turn being speaker and listener, debrief with discussion points:*

Conclude with Discussion Points:

- a. How did it feel to be the speaker in the first round (when the listener was attentive)?
- b. What did the listener do to make you feel he/she was paying attention?
- c. In the second round, how did it feel to be a speaker?
- d. What did the listener do to make you feel he/she was not paying attention to you?
- e. What did you learn about being a good listener?
- f. What behaviors encourage people to talk to us?
- g. How can we use these techniques when facilitating the program?