

Eight Steps for Active Listening

- 1. *Make eye contact with the speaker.***
- 2. *Focus on the speaker. Don't just "hear" what is being said, really listen by blocking out other distractions.***
- 3. *Listen for the feelings as well as the words being spoken.***
- 4. *Show that you are listening by occasional nods of your head, and by saying "uh huh" or other short words in the course of listening. Periodically check with the speaker to make sure that you have heard correctly. For example, you might say, "So you're saying he's really changed?" If you don't grasp what the speaker means, ask a clarifying question to show that you are paying attention.***
- 5. *Keep the speaker on track. If she starts to get off the subject or expand on a detail unrelated to the problem, try to help her refocus on the issue she was discussing.***
- 6. *Show acceptance. You can do this primarily by not making judgments about what is being said with your facial expression or your remarks.***
- 7. *Respond to what is being said. (We will discuss responding skills later.)***
- 8. *Give appropriate feedback. (We will discuss feedback later.)***