

## Workshop 1: ACTIVE LISTENING AND OBSERVING

Developed by TUCEP

Short overview:

The goal of this workshop is to raise awareness among educators and VET practitioners about the importance of using teaching approaches based **on active listening and observation** in their daily practices.

Listening is not just hearing what the speaker has to say, but an active listening that involves attention, absence of judgment, reflection, clarification, and sharing—listening with all the senses. It requires fully engaging with what the other person is saying, demonstrating attentiveness, and fostering more meaningful, productive conversations.

Active listening is essential in the learning process because it creates a space where all students feel valued, heard, and understood, fostering inclusion and integration. By attentively engaging with diverse perspectives, educators can identify individual needs, encourage participation, and build trust.

Learning Outcomes of the Workshop:

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| <b>By the end of the workshop VET practitioner will....</b> | 1. understand that the listening process involves more than just hearing words                                |
|   | 2. foster an interactive environment where learners feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgement |
|   | 3. be able to tailor the communication style to meet the needs of individual learners                         |
|   | 4. give constructive feedback that reinforces the value of considering different perspective                  |
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Overview of the Workshop:

| Description of the learning activities, including methods and instructions to the TRAINER   | Timing (minutes) | Materials and resources (Including links)  |
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| <p><u>Introduction to the workshop:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facilitator invites participants to introduce themselves (name, city of origin, job, years of experience in education, target group they usually work with and any other useful information).</li> <li>• Invite participants to fill in the <u>workshop pre- evaluation form</u> and discuss the results together.</li> <li>• Ask to participants to share their ideas about why a trainer should demonstrate active listening and observing in the teaching process.</li> </ul> | 20 minutes       | Sign-in sheet<br>Pre-evaluation form   |
| <p><u>Active Listening and Observing skills: overview</u></p> <p>The facilitator will introduce the participants on the workshop's topic using the Power Point presentation. In the first part, the facilitator will talk about the meaning of active listening and observing skills and why it is important that VET practitioners demonstrate them in the teaching process.</p> <p>Participants share their experiences regarding the <b>challenges</b> they face in applying active listening during the teaching process.</p>   | 20 minutes       | Slides<br>Suggested learning materials: <u><a href="#">What is Active Listening?</a></u> |

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| <p><u>Active listening techniques</u></p> <p>Active listening and reflecting, responding and giving feedback are not always easy. Enhancing active listening skills involves more than just hearing someone speak. The facilitator will present 5 techniques to put active listening skills to practice through the Power Point presentation. After this presentation, the facilitator should invite participants to take part to the group activity aimed at putting in practice some of these techniques.</p> <p><u>Whole Group Activity [1]:</u></p> <p><b>Reflective Listening:</b> In small groups, one person tells a story or shares a situation while the others listen without interrupting. At the end, listeners have to reflect what they have understood, summarising and reporting the emotions or key points that have emerged. This activity helps to improve the ability to understand and rephrase content.</p> <p><u>Whole Group Activity [2]:</u></p> <p>Talking about active listening techniques involving non-verbal cues and body language, the facilitator proposes the following group activity:</p> <p><b>Active Silence Game:</b> In pairs, one person talks about a topic of their choice and the other cannot respond verbally, but only has to communicate with body language to show that they are actively listening. At the end, reflection is held on how non-verbal cues influence communication.</p> | <p><u>30 minutes</u></p> | <p>Slide (5 active listening techniques)</p> <p>Suggested learning materials:</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Active Listening: Mastering the Art of Engagement</u></a></p> <p>Video: <a href="#"><u>Active listening: verbal signals</u></a></p> <p>Video: <a href="#"><u>Active listening: body language</u></a></p> |
| <p><u>Obstacles and benefits of Active Listening:</u></p>   | <p><u>20 minutes</u></p> |  |

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| <p>When it comes to listening effectively, there are several common obstacles you may encounter. The facilitator will discuss with participants what elements hinder effective active listening</p> <p><b>Whole Groups Activity [3]:</b> <b>brainstorming activity</b> where participants are asked to share their ideas about obstacles based on their professional experiences with different target learners.</p> <p>After collecting the main findings on the obstacles to effective active listening, the facilitator will present the benefits to be an active listener during the teaching process.</p>   |                          |                                      |
|  |                          | Slide (benefits of active listening) |
| <p><u>Give constructive feedback</u></p> <p>Providing constructive feedback and receiving feedback graciously are essential components of active listening. Effective feedback allows for growth and understanding on both sides of the conversation. The facilitator explores this topic through the Power Point presentation, and then invite participants to the following group activity:</p> <p><u>Whole Groups Activity [4]:</u></p> <p><b>Group discussion with feedback:</b> propose the following situation and have participants discuss it in a circle:</p> <p><b>Context:</b> An educator welcomes a new migrant student who has limited knowledge of the local language. During lessons, the student participates very little, struggles to follow explanations, and isolates themselves from classmates. Some educators interpret this behavior as a lack of interest or</p> | <p><u>30 minutes</u></p> | Slide                                |

motivation.

**Problematic Situation:** The educator presents the following question to the participants:

*"If you were in a classroom with this student, how could you better understand their difficulties? What strategies could you adopt to encourage their participation and sense of inclusion?"*

**Discussion Dynamics:**

- Each participant proposes an idea to address the situation.
- Other participants listen carefully and provide feedback, highlighting the strengths and potential improvements of each proposal.
- The educator facilitates the discussion by asking questions to emphasize the importance of active listening, observing non-verbal cues, and using empathy to understand the student's real challenges.

This scenario helps educators develop greater sensitivity in interpreting the needs of disadvantaged students and reflecting on effective inclusive strategies. In addition, this helps to improve listening awareness and develop more thoughtful responses.

Optional Activity [5]:

**Post-listening debriefing:** Ask participants to listen to [this video](#) recording of a complex conversation. Then, in small groups, they should discuss what they noticed in terms of active listening, empathy, interruptions, or non-verbal cues, and suggest improvements.

... minutes

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| <p><u>Feedback and workshop evaluation</u></p> <p>The facilitator will summarise the main points discussed during the workshop and outline the lesson learnt in a bullet point. The participants should be encouraged to share what they found particularly useful and what they would like to put in place with the learners they work with.</p> <p>Finally, the facilitator asks participants to fill in the workshop evaluation form.</p> | <p><u>30 minutes</u></p> | <p><u><a href="#">Workshop evaluation form</a></u></p> |
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Additional resources for the trainer to explore:

- [Active listening: the most important skills for effective mentors](#): This article shows 7 steps mentors should take note to increase their active listening skill. The tips included in this article can be applied in various settings which requires an effective communication in the VET field as well.
- [Active Listening](#) – Mind Tools content team: see the video about active listening
- [Active listening and open communication](#): it is a module included in the OERs developed within PRACTICE project (Preventing Radicalism through Critical Thinking Competences) co-funded by EC focusing on promotion of social, civic & intercultural competences of secondary school students. This module provides opportunities to explore communication styles that teachers and educational support staff can adapt successful examples in personally and professionally both in academic and non-academic cognitive settings.
- [What is Active Listening?](#) : is a lesson and related activity resources enabling teachers and trainers to examine and practice active listening skills in the education setting and to explore the role of active listening in managing conflicts. The materials have been developed by United States Institute of Peace (Washington)
- [Listening with Power](#): is included in the COMMONS OERs and is intended to serve as either a stand-alone learning module on listening. It introduces students to academic study of listening and treats listening as a thriving sub-discipline (of interpersonal communications) that can be explored from an academic perspective. Although it is mainly addressed to academic students, the exercises and tips included in this educational material may be useful to VET educators to improve their active listening skill.