**Handout on Listening Skills** (Adapted from source: *Section F Working with your PASS group* which was developed as part of the Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) <http://www.ait.ie/pass/> )

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ineffective Listening** | **Effective Listening** |
| **Non-verbal behaviour** | |
| Listener looks bored, uninterested or judgemental; avoids eye contact; displays distracting mannerisms; (doodles, plays with a paperclip, looks out of the window etc.) | Listener maintains positive posture; avoids distracting mannerisms; keeps attention focused on speaker; maintains eye contact; nods and smiles when appropriate. |
| **Focus on attention** | |
| Listener keeps focus of comments on self: “*When something like that happens to me, I ….”* | Listener shifts focus on attention to the speakers: *“When that happened, what did you do?”* |
| **Acceptance** | |
| Listener fails to accept speaker’s ideas and feelings: *“I think it would have been better to …”* | Listener accepts ideas and feelings: *“That’s an interesting idea; can you say more about it?”* |
| **Empathy** | |
| Listener fails to empathise: *“I don’t see why you felt that”.* | Listener empathises *“So you weren’t very happy about that”.* |
| **Probing** | |
| Listener fails to probe into an area to better understand an idea or feeling. | Listener probes in a helpful way to follow up on an idea or feeling *“Could you tell me more about what led you to feel that way?”* and follows up: *“You said that …”* |
| **Paraphrasing** | |
| Listener fails to check by restating in her own words important statements made by the speaker. | Listener paraphrases at an appropriate time to check understanding *“So what you’re saying is ..”* |
| **Summarising** | |
| Listener fails to summarise. | Listener summarises progress of the conversation from time to time. |
| **Advising** | |
| Listener narrows the range of ideas by suggesting a ‘correct’ course of action: *“Here’s what I suggest you do”, “Why don’t you do this?”* | Listener asks what speaker wants to do, or widens the range of ideas by suggesting a number of alternatives from which the speaker can choose: “*So what would you like to do?” “Which option do you prefer?”* |

**Handout on Asking and Re-directing questions.** (Adapted from source: *Section C How to run a PASS session* which was developed as part of the Peer Assisted Student Support (PASS) <http://www.ait.ie/pass/>)

The key to encouraging learning is asking questions of your students that make them do the thinking and talking – and then actively listening to them.

Questions serve at least 3 purpses in a tutor/ student engagement: to test the student’s prior knowledge, to clarify information and to stimulate the stuident’s into expressing ideas and constructing learning for themselves.

1. **Redirecting questions.**

How to effectively turn the questions back to the student and not immediately give the answers yourself.

* People learn through practicing, testing out their ideas, getting feedback from others, and reflecting on their own experiences. In other words when they make the effort, take responsibility for their own learning, and relate and apply new information to their own context.
* People do not learn if they are just told the answers.
* Examples of re-direction questions:

*“Well what do you think?”*

*“What information do you need for that answer?”*

*“What was said in class about this?”*

*“Lets try and work that out together….”*

*“What is the first thing you need to do….?*

*“What do you need to do next… ?”*

1. **Open-ended questions.**

* The best questions are usually open-ended (ones that require more than a yes, no, or short answer).
* Open-ended questions will encourage your student to think back and draw on their experiences, what they have read, what they recall.
* Open-ended questions require students to provide more considered responses.

1. **Socratic (guiding) questions.**

* Socratic questioning can be used to lead students to correct answers.
* Example of a stream of Socratic (guiding) questions :

Ask first  *“What is the first thing we need to do to solve this?”* followed by *“What do we need to do next?”* followed by *“And then what…..?”* and so on.

1. **Probing questions.**

* To get the student to engage more deeply with the material being learnt.
* Examples of probing questions:

*“Where did that idea come from?”*

*“What led you to think that?”*

*“How did you arrive at that answer?”*

*“How does that fit in with ….?”*

*“How can you be sure about that?”*

*“Are there any other possibilities?”*

1. **Clarification questions.**

* You should request further clarification or explanation when a student’s answer is vague or unclear.
* When you do this try to make you voice sound **curious** rather than crtical.
* Examples ofclarification questions:

*“Could you explain that in a little more detail?”*

*“Can you be more specific?”*

*“Anything else you would like to add?”*

*“Could you put that another way.?”*

*“How would you write that down in an exam?”*

*“What do you mean by X?”*

1. **Questions to improve critical awareness.**

* Used whan the tutor suspects that the student doesn’t fully understand what they are saying or to get the student to reflect on their answer.
* Examples

*“What are you assuming here?”*

*“Could you give an example of that?”*

*“Do you have evidence to support that?”*

*“How have you come to that conclusion?”*

1. **Questions which encourage students to re-focus.**

* These questions will encourage students to see concepts from another perspective by focussing on relationships.
* Examples

*“How is that related to…?”*

*“How does that tie into...?”*

*“How does that compare with…?”*

*“If that is true what would happen if…?”*

1. **Taking stock questions**

* Used towards the end of a session whan you want the student to reflect on progress made, to summarise information or to suggest some ways forward.
* Examples

*“So, where are we in relation to …?”*

*“So between now and next session…?”*

**Appendix 1: Listening Skills exercise scenarios**

1. Trainee tutors are divided into pairs
2. One trainee tutor is assigned the role of Tutor and the other role of Student
3. The ‘Tutor’ and the ‘Student’ are given one minute to read the instructions.
4. The pair is then given the *Equation of the Line* TASK and have 8 minutes to work through the scenario.

TASK: Equation of a Line

The equation of a line L with slope m and containing the point (x1, y1) is:

y – y1 = m(x – x1)

1. Find the equation of the line containing the point (-3, 2) and whose slope is 2.
2. Find the equation of the line containing the points (3,-1) and whose slope is 

Instructions for ‘Tutors’

* Explain what the task is asking the student to do… e.g. Why do you need a point and the slope to calculate the equation of a line?
* Explain the steps involved
* Be patient
* Ask them questions
* Look out for calculation errors
* Praise them for good work
* Make use of **active listening** techniques

Instructions for ‘Students’

* Act as though you have never calculated the equation of a line before this
* Ask questions on why you need both a point **and** the slope
* Mix up substituting the x and y coordinates of the given point
* Make errors in calculations
* Think of difficulties that a first year student who is not confident mathematically might have
* Get the tutor to explain something again in a different way – i.e. “I don’t understand”
* Praise them for good work

**Appendix 2: Questioning Skills exercise scenarios**

1. Trainee tutors are divided into pairs
2. One trainee tutor is assigned the role of Tutor and the other role of Student
3. The ‘Tutor’ and the ‘Student’ are given one minute to read the instructions.
4. The pair is then given the *Simultaneous Equations* TASK and have 8 minutes to work through the scenario.

TASK: Simultaneous Equations

Solve the following pairs of simultaneous equations:

1. x + 2y = 6 2. x + y = 7

3x – 2y = 10 2x + y = 12

Instructions for ‘Tutors’

* Explain what simultaneous equations are
* Explain what you are trying to do – i.e. the purpose of solving the simultaneous equation
* How you solve simultaneous equations
* Be patient with the student
* Take note of difficulties with multiplying, dividing and changing signs
* Make use of **different types** of **questioning.**

Instructions for ‘Students’

* Act as though you know nothing about simultaneous equations
* Make errors with multiplying, adding/subtracting, changing signs – Do this deliberately in order to challenge the tutor
* Ask questions about why you are required to do certain steps
* Think of the difficulties that a first year student who is not confident mathematically might have.