

Assess your own listening

Source: OPSEU course, *Advancing Union Issues through Labour Management Committees*



Most of us think we're good listeners, but most of us would rather talk. Imagine you're talking to an angry member who's upset about something their supervisor did. Evaluate your own listening practices:

My practices	Always	Sometimes	Never
1. I stop talking to listen.			
2. I don't interrupt. I give people the time they need to express themselves.			
3. I concentrate on the words, ideas and feelings of the speaker.			
4. I look at the speaker. In most western cultures, this shows you're listening.			
5. I try to put my feelings aside, particularly if I'm feeling defensive. Defensiveness is an obstacle to listening.			
6. I avoid distractions, e.g. I don't twiddle objects or check my watch and cell phone			
7. I ask questions for clarification if I don't understand their point.			
8. I react to the idea, not the person, particularly if I dislike her or him			
9. I listen for how something is said, not just what is said (the feelings behind it)			
10. I don't jump to conclusions. I don't assume that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know what the other person is saying • The other person is lying because they see things differently than me • This complaint will be as unfounded as the last one 			