

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ACTIVE LISTENING



Why this is important:

This practical active listening worksheet is tailored for construction jobsite leaders, to improve communication, trust, and team coordination. It can help you strengthen your ability to listen attentively, confirm your understanding with body language and clear expressions, and respond effectively during daily jobsite interactions.

How to use this worksheet:

Review this list and try to bring one or two of these active listening exercises to the jobsite everyday. You might also want to discuss these examples with your team.

SHOWING ATTENTIVENESS

Maintain eye contact	Focusing on the speaker shows respect and engagement. This is especially important on noisy job sites where verbal instructions can be missed.
Keep an open and relaxed posture	Avoid crossing arms, as this can signal disinterest.
Minimize distractions	Put away phones and step away from loud or busy areas if possible. This shows the speaker that the conversation is valued.
Use verbal and non-verbal cues	Instead of answering questions with a simple “yes” or “no,”, ask questions that encourage the speaker to elaborate. For instance, “What are some of the obstacles you’re running into?” shows interest in their perspective.

CLARIFYING AND CONFIRMING

Paraphrase and summarize	Restate what the crew member has said in your own words. This confirms that the message was understood correctly and gives them an opportunity to clarify. For example, “So, what I’m hearing is that the new material is causing a delay.”
Ask open-ended questions	Instead of answering questions with a simple “yes” or “no,” ask questions that encourage the speaker to elaborate. For instance, “What are some of the obstacles you’re running into,” shows interest in their perspective.
Verify assumptions	On a fast-paced job site, it’s easy to make assumptions. Instead of guessing or jumping to conclusions, you should verify what you heard by repeating it. This can prevent costly errors.

RESPONDING WITH EMPATHY AND CARE

Withhold judgment	Listen to the team member’s concerns without interrupting, arguing, or forming preconceived notions. This creates a safe environment for open communication.
Acknowledge emotions	Sometimes a team member just needs to vent. In these situations, validate their feelings. You can say, “I hear that this is a frustrating situation,” before moving on to problem-solving.
Provide feedback and support	After listening, provide constructive feedback and support based on what was heard. This can include offering suggestions, helping to solve problems, or praising efforts.

ENCOURAGING A FEEDBACK LOOP

Learn from feedback	Be receptive to input from team members and be willing to change your own perspective. A jobsite leader who listens to their crew’s insights often discovers a better way to perform a task.
Reflect on listening habits	Regularly review your own communication interactions. Consider how you listened, and what you might do differently next time. This continuous self-reflection helps you grow as a listener and leader.

NOTES:

