



CODE BLUE

TRAINING FOR LOCAL LEADERS

MODULE FOUR

COMMUNICATION

- Session 1- Non-verbal listening
- Session 2- Some Active listening skills
- Session 3- Putting it all together



LEADER'S MANUAL

The Salvation Army

Australia Territory



COMMUNICATION

Session 2: SOME ACTIVE LISTENING SKILLS

AIM:

This session is designed to help participants understand and begin to practise three specific active listening skills.

TIME NEEDED:

75 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:


Participants' manual, multi-media, whiteboard. Appendix 1: Paraphrase statement handout, Appendix 2: feeling words handout, Appendix 3: Perception check handout.

NAVIGATING THE SESSION:

Text in **blue** is for your information. It's also directing you to do something.

Text in **red** is for you to "read out" or "answers" for participants to fill in.

Text in **black** also appears in the participants' notes and can be followed as you read aloud.

This symbol  indicates a slide is available to display via multimedia.

INTRODUCTION:

As we can see from the previous session, listening effectively takes our time and energy. It involves the way in which we communicate focus and care by our non-verbal behaviours. Listening effectively also involves the appropriate use of a number of verbal skills. We are going to look at three of these in this session and begin practising them. These three skills, along with a number of other listening skills are taught in any course on listening skills. They are called **active** listening skills because we are actively involved with the person we are listening to when we use them appropriately in the communication process. These skills, along with others are also taught in a course called "Lab One". This course enables us to learn the language of healing through listening effectively to others. If you are interested in developing your listening skills, Lab One is an excellent one week course in which to participate. Lab One courses are run periodically through The Salvation Army.



PARAPHRASE (20 minutes)



The first skill, *Paraphrase*, is helpful in **clarifying** and **understanding** the **content** of a message someone is giving you.

DEFINING PARAPHRASE

- Paraphrase is **restating**, in your own words, what you understood the other person to say.
- It is NOT parroting (repeating word for word).
- The paraphrase identifies only with the **content**, as words equal only 7% of the communication.

DESCRIBING PARAPHRASE

- When you paraphrase, you give the other person the opportunity to correct you if your paraphrase is wrong. It clears up misunderstanding.
- Paraphrasing is responding to the other person's verbal message in such a way that you test your understanding of what was said.
- Listen for **KEY WORDS** that are repeated and use them in the paraphrase.
- Your paraphrase should not be longer than the original statement.
- The more natural (and less clinical) your paraphrase is, the more productive you will be in listening and communicating.

Paraphrase stems:



Some examples of paraphrase 'stems' or opening phrases are:

"I understand you to say that..."

"You're telling me that..."

"You are saying that..."

"Let me repeat what I'm hearing..."

"Let me check if I am getting this correctly..."

"What I hear you saying is..." *[this one tends to get overused]*

DEMONSTRATION

Choose a simple topic like "holidays".

Use a co-leader or if one is not available, ask for a volunteer explaining that all you want them to do is talk about their last holiday.

Paraphrase the speaker's statements, using the stems above or invent your own.

This exercise only needs to go for a few minutes, as long as there is ample opportunity to demonstrate the paraphrasing skill.



WRITTEN EXERCISE

Instructions

- Ask participants to complete the handout. (Appendix 1)
- It might be helpful for them to underline the key words on the exercise.
- Have them work in pairs, completing the exercise alone first and then checking their responses with a learning partner.
- Ask for feedback as to the difficulty or ease with which this exercise was completed. Check to see what was particularly difficult, if anything.

VERBAL EXERCISE



(In pairs. Follow instructions then reverse roles)

Instructions (Allow ten minutes for this exercise)

- Sit face to face with your learning partner
- One person will be “A” and the other, “B”.
- “A” will talk for 3 minutes about any subject of their choice.
- “B” will respond by paraphrasing – not every sentence, but do not wait until the 3 minutes are up to paraphrase.
- “A” cooperates by pausing now and then to give “B” a chance to practise paraphrasing.

Debrief (1 minute)



- “A” feeds back to “B” how well they paraphrased.
- Did “B” stick strictly to the content?
- How could “B” improve the paraphrases?
- What effect did lag time have on the exercise? Did you notice it?

Now reverse roles and follow the procedure again.

“B” is the speaker. “A” will respond with paraphrases

Debrief



- “B” feeds back to “A” how well they paraphrased.
- Did “A” stick strictly to the content?
- How could “A” improve the paraphrases?
- What effect did lag time have on the exercise? Did you notice it?



PRODUCTIVE QUESTIONS (30 minutes)



DEFINING PRODUCTIVE QUESTIONS

- Productive questioning is the ability to **ask questions** on **free** information (ideas or feelings), **deleted** information (incomplete thoughts) and responses to **other questions** you have asked.
- Use what, how, when, who and **carefully** use **why** questions.

INTRODUCING PRODUCTIVE QUESTIONS

- Most people know how to ask questions.
- We learn to ask questions at a very early age.
- By three years old, children ask, “Why?”
- Productive questions let the speaker know they are being heard.
- Questions are a listening skill because you cannot ask productive questions unless you are listening.

APPROPRIATE USE OF QUESTIONS



- Creative questions are the fuel for **perpetuating the conversation**. They prompt the speaker’s story. In other words, they give the speaker permission to tell more.
- Productive questions are **facilitating**. They can also be used to **gather data**.
- **Free information** is information given to you for which you did not ask. If you follow the free information you will stay with the speaker’s agenda.

EXAMPLE: A person says, “I’m not sure I should tell you this, but our daughter, who is twenty, was just kicked out of college.”

QUESTION: “What happened for you when you heard that news?”

- **Deletion** or incomplete thoughts. Deletion occurs when certain ideas or words are left out of the message the speaker sends you, or when vague ideas or words are sent. There is a void in the message or it is vague and leaves a question in your mind.

EXAMPLE: A persons says, “I don’t like what is going on at church!”

QUESTION: “What’s going on at church that you don’t like?”



- **Distortion.** This is when people speak in generalisations, extremes or exaggerations. For example, always, never, everyone, no-one, coldest. In your responding question, pick up on the distorted word that is used by the speaker.

EXAMPLE: A person says, “No-one ever speaks to me”; “Everyone is always late”

QUESTION: Emphasise the No-one in this question; “**No-one** ever speaks to you?”

INNAPPROPRIATE USE OF QUESTIONS



- **Changing the subject** with a question at an inappropriate time.
- Asking questions that **break the flow** of the conversation.
- **Probing too quickly** and invading private space, before a high trust level is established.
- Asking questions that are **too intimate**, especially before trust is established in the relationship.
- Asking “**why**” questions that put the speaker on the defensive.
- Asking **closed** questions. These may be answered by “yes” or “no”. These kinds of questions do not perpetuate the conversation.
- There is a fine line between **interrogation** and **creative** questions.

INTERROGATION:

Asking questions based on information **YOU** want and not what the speaker wants to tell you. It is following your agenda and not the speaker’s.

LOADED QUESTIONS:

A statement hidden in the form of a question, for example, “You mean you are a Christian and you don’t go to church?” [implies judgement]

The person’s response to this could be an impression of
“I’m not sure whether you are asking me for information
or
“Trying to tell me something.”

RED FLAG:

Questions can be grossly overused. It is a skill that most people have well integrated and tend to rely on to the exclusion of other appropriate skills.



VERBAL EXERCISE (10 Minutes total)

- Choose one other person – someone you would like to know better.
- One team member will be “A”, the other “B”.
- Decide now.
- “A” will ask questions ONLY for 3 minutes.
- “A”, starts with an open-ended question such as: “What would you like to talk about?”
- This allows “B” to set the agenda.
- “B” will answer. This is not a role play. Make it real life.
- “A” will need to listen for free information and incomplete thoughts.

(Allow three minutes for this exercise)

DEBRIEF:



“A”, share with “B” what it’s like to use your lag time to think about the next question.

“B”, what kinds of questions helped you to keep telling your story?”

(Allow a minute)

- Reverse roles – “B” asks questions and “A” answers.
- “B”, begin with an open-ended question (i.e., “What’s on your mind?”)

(Allow 3 minutes)

DEBRIEF:

As for above
(1 minute)

PERCEPTION CHECK (25 minutes)

DEFINING PERCEPTION CHECK

- Perception check is making a **guess** at the **emotional inner state** of another person, (guessing what they are feeling/experiencing).
- The listener owns the perception and checks it out.

DESCRIBING PERCEPTION CHECK

Handout Appendix 2 – Feeling words



- The perception check is a statement that includes **tentative** language and one or more **feeling words**, followed by a **question** to check its accuracy.
Example: “I’m wondering if you might be upset about that. Am I right?”
- It does not **tell** the other person how they feel, in other words, it is not a “you” statement. i.e, it is not saying, “You’re really angry, aren’t you?”.



- It deals primarily with tone and body language (93% of communication)
- The perception check is one of the most **caring** skills we can develop. It is a caring behaviour of inquiry.
- It conveys **concern** for the other person; for their feelings.
- It does not have to be correct, but should be reasonably close. The person will usually respond with the correct feeling if you make a wrong guess.
- One way of getting in touch with what the other person is feeling is to test your own emotion at the time.
- The intensity of the feeling word used depends on the trust level that you have with the person (i.e. upset vs. furious)
- **Low** trust level – use a feeling word of **low** intensity.
- **High** trust level – a feeling word of **high** intensity may be used.

B: EXAMPLE OF STEMS



“I get the impression that...”

“It appears to me that...”

“It seems to me that...”

“I’m wondering if...”

“It sounds to me as if...”

“Is it possible that...”

“I have a hunch that...”

“I sense that...”

“I perceive that...”

“I get the feeling that...”



EXERCISE

- Leader tells a short story or experience to the group without using “feeling” words. The story may be real or fictional.
- Ask the group to identify FEELING WORDS ONLY that they think you may be experiencing.
- Leader asks the group, “Which one was it?” [Answer: there is no way to know unless you check your guess. – that is done with a perception check].
- Say, “I’d like one of you now to make a perception check using one of the ‘feeling’ words mentioned or any feeling word.”
- Refer to your feeling words and language stems for prompts.
- Leader gently coaches where necessary.

VERBAL EXERCISE (Allow 10 minutes)

Handout Appendix 3 – Statements for Perception Checks

Have people get into pairs for these role plays. One is a speaker and one is a listener. The speaker reads Statement One with feeling and the listener is to give a perception check. The speaker will read the next two statements and after each one the listener gives a perception check.

DEBRIEF

Did the listener use a stem?
Did they finish with the question?
Did they perceive the emotion reasonably accurately?

(Allow 1-2 minutes for debrief)

Swap roles. Read the next three statements using the same format as above.

DEBRIEF (As above)

(If there is time the participants may choose to have a go at one more statement each, numbers seven and eight, using the same process as above)

Remember, using these skills appropriately when you are actively listening to another person will keep them at the focus of your attention and communicate a powerful message of care and support.

In the next session, which is primarily a practise session, we will put all the skills together.

Close the session in prayer, perhaps asking participants beforehand what they most appreciate about the way God listens to them.