



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 1: NON-VERBAL LISTENING

AIM:

This session is designed to help participants understand the importance of using congruent non-verbal behaviour in listening; using the SOLER SUN model and minimal prompts skill.

TIME NEEDED:

60-90 minutes.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Participants' manual, multi-media, whiteboard.

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 (10 minutes)

Communication is far more than talking to another person and receiving a response. It is a complex aspect of being human and poor communication can be complicated by misunderstandings and misinterpretations. One aspect of communication that we will be looking at and developing over the next three sessions is the foundation of good communication; that is listening well.

In this first session, we are going to see how we listen with our bodies and ways in which we can use non-verbal skills to maximise effective listening in the communication process. In the next session, we will look at three specific verbal listening skills, which will enhance your communication, and in the third session, we will spend some time practising these skills.

In this session we are going to look at non-verbal behaviours which when used will communicate that you are focussed on the person who is talking. Some of you may find that you do these things naturally. If so, then today's session will affirm and encourage you. If you are only beginning to develop these skills then I encourage you to practise them and use them whenever you listen to family or friends.

Listening well is one of the finest gifts we can give to others. People in today's world desperately want to be listened to; they want to be able to tell their story and be heard.

It is often in the telling of their story and having someone listen effectively to them that people begin to find solutions to their own circumstances.



Role Play

Conduct a role play where one leader is telling a story and the other leader is listening very poorly. Examples of poor listening are interrupting, asking inappropriate questions, beginning your own counter story before being distracted, yawning, looking at your watch, giving an occasional minimal prompt and then immediately looking away. The poor listening is deliberately overplayed so the participants in this session will observe and note the behaviour.

The role play only needs to go for one to one and a half minutes. It doesn't need to have a defined ending – just stop when it seems enough poor listening has been demonstrated.

If there is only one leader, find someone who is willing to be the storyteller. Ensure that you tell them (quietly) what you will be doing, otherwise they may be offended.

Tell participants that this is an overt example of what not to do when we are listening to people. Have participants name the poor listening behaviours in their own words and then write them on the white board.

PART ONE: NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION (20 minutes)

Read poem – On listening

*When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice
You have not done as I have asked
When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way,
You are trampling on my feelings
When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my
problem,
You have failed me, strange as it may seem
Listen! All I asked was that you listen
Not talk or do – just hear me.
Advice is cheap – \$1.00 will get you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the same
newspaper
And I can do for myself; I am not helpless
When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my
fear and weakness.*

*But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, now matter how irrational,
then I can quit trying to convince you and can get about the business of understanding
what is behind this irrational feeling.
And when, that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.*

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what is behind them.

*So, please listen and just hear me, and, if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn,
and I will listen to you.*

Anonymous



LAG TIME



- According to Wolff, Marsnik et al, *Perceptive Listening* (1983) the following rates are given for speaking and processing words in our minds:
We can talk at a rate of about 120 to 180 words per minute.
Our minds can process (listen to) words from 400 to 800 words per minute.
- The rates of speed given are social conversational rates.
- Lag Time means that you have time left over in your head to think, while listening.
- Our culture does not teach us how to listen – it teaches us how to talk.
- Most people listen to another individual as if they were a single instrument and not a whole orchestra. In other words, we do not hear everything the person is telling us.
- Listening is RESPONDING to another person's message.
- Sometimes a good listener will know more about the speaker than the speaker knows about themself.
- We usually use our lag time unproductively – such as jumping on the defence or jumping to a conclusion.
- Part of this session is designed to retrain your lag time to be more productive.

To listen **effectively** means that we must give them the **focus** of our **attention**.

CONGRUENCE IN COMMUNICATION



In any communication, our words, tone of voice and body language need to give the same message. This is called **congruence**. If our words and tone say one thing, but our body language says another, we send a **mixed** message and people will not believe our words.

When the speaker's words say one thing but the tone says another, it is **sarcasm**; the words are denied by the tone, therefore the words are the last thing you believe.

We can learn to control words and tone, but it is harder to control the body. Body language is usually loud and clear as “actions speak louder than words”.

People will believe our body language before they believe our words or what the tone of our voice is conveying. This is one very profound reason why when we are listening to others, our body language conveys attention and we focus on the person we are listening to.



DEMONSTRATION

Sit down on a chair in front of the group and say using the appropriate tone:

“Yes I’m really interested in what you’re saying” while at the same time looking pointedly at your watch.

Ask the group what message they received

What about these messages? Choose another two to do before the group.

“I wish I could stay”	(squirming off chair)
“I really must go”	(settling back in chair)
“I’m not angry with the church!”	(angry tone)
“You’re the most exciting group I’ve worked with”	(sarcastic tone, fold arms and turn your back to the group)

Which do you believe – the words or the body language?

The use of **words**, **tone** and **body language** in communication fall into the following percentages in terms of what people will believe in any given conversation. 📄

Words	7%
Tone	38%
Body Language	55%

Some facts: 📄

- Facial expression depicts emotion
- Body language depicts the intensity of emotion.
- The Body always responds before the mouth does.
- On the telephone, you lose over half of your ability to communicate – around 55%.

How can we listen, using our body language effectively?

We are going to look at an acronym, which will help you to give your attention to the person being listened to using non-verbal cues.



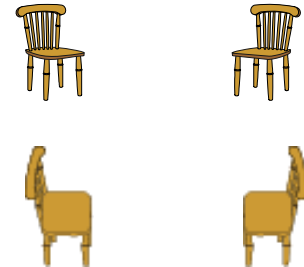
PART TWO: SOLER SUN: A Non Verbal Model (30 minutes)



The Acronym

S is for **square on**. If you are sitting or standing with someone, try and sit or stand in front of them – square on. It conveys a message of “I’m here for you, I’m available”. If the physical confines of the room or location don’t allow for face-to-face communication, ensure that the angle in which you face them is as close as possible to that.

Demonstrate using two chairs and both the angles below



O is for **open posture**. As opposed to closed posture. Closed posture could be crossed arms and/or crossed legs. Open posture is like this (Demonstrate: ensure legs are not crossed, arms resting lightly on your legs or lap)

L is for **lean forward**. You may find that you do this naturally. As the other person is talking, lean toward them just a little. This communicates that you are listening attentively to them. A slight inclination of the upper part of our body communicates again that we are interested in them and what they have to say.

E is for **eye contact**. We don’t want to have a staring competition with the person we are listening to, but we do need to give and maintain eye contact, looking at them naturally.

It is not an unnatural thing for two people in meaningful conversation to keep steady eye contact. Again, this kind of eye contact conveys our interest in them and what they are saying. (Some people find eye-contact difficult especially when talking to a large group. Explain that this skill may need to be practised if people are uncomfortable with it)

R is for **relaxed**. This means not fidgeting or using distracting expressions.

Exercise:

Have participants sit in pairs. Have one person tell a story about their last holiday while the other person simply listens, no questions or verbal language. Using the SOLER method ensure they fulfill the five instructions of this acronym. After two minutes swap roles.

Ask questions about how they managed the first five instructions.

Which was easiest?

Which was most difficult?



The second part of the acronym spells SUN 

S is for **Smile**. When we commence a conversation, a smile is a positive start. Smile at appropriate times during the conversation.


Ask participants when would it be inappropriate to smile ie. when someone is crying or in pain.

U is for **use facial expression**. Appropriate facial expression.

N is for **Nod**. As the person is talking to you, nod occasionally as they talk. This is a strong non-verbal communicator that you are with them and listening.

These three things all communicate that we are 'with' the person we are listening to, not just physically, but mentally. Our non-verbal behaviour communicates **care** and **attention**.

Did you find that you were using some of the SUN concepts during the SOLER exercise without noticing it?

SOLER SUN - **Revise** 



PART THREE: MINIMAL PROMPTS: Verbal Technique (10 minutes)



A Minimal Prompt is a verbal prompt, which will

- encourage the speaker to keep talking
- lets the speaker know you are interested and 'with' them

It is minimal in that it is **simple** and **short**.

Examples:

- OK
- Aha
- Mm
- Right
- Yes

Minimal prompts are not expressions of feeling or reaction such as

- Really?
- Wow?
- No way!
- Are you serious?

What would be the dangers of bringing in these verbal statements?

Communicate judgement

Distract the speaker from their agenda

There are also dangers with minimal prompts.

Ask what you think they might be?



DANGERS



Overuse can be very off-putting for the speaker
Need to develop a variety of minimal prompts to use

Exercise:

Have participants get into pairs. One is a speaker and one is a listener. The speaker will talk about their favourite movie or a good book they have read. The listener is to use SOLER SUN and minimal prompts only. The speaker will talk for two minutes before the speaker and listener swap roles.

Ask the following questions of the group:

What was difficult about that exercise as a listener?

What was helpful for the speakers in the way they were listened to?

CONCLUSION

To listen appropriately and to stay focussed on the speaker requires our energy and concentration. However, the benefits of listening well will include people feeling heard and therefore feeling significant.

To listen well is one of the finest gifts we can offer to another.

Close the session in prayer.