

Eli's Rehab Report

The Do's And Don'ts of Listening

Do's:

Clear your schedule and make time to listen to the person.

- Ask the other person if it's a good time to talk.
- Listen with understanding rather than being critical or judgmental.
- Make eye contact with the speaker.
- Face the other person and display an open, relaxed posture.
- Make your mind a blank slate. Don't think about other things while listening.
- Be patient.
- Acknowledge the speaker by nodding your head, leaning forward and displaying appropriate facial expressions, as well as vocally acknowledging the person.
- Intermittently summarize or mirror back what the person is saying
- Invite the speaker to say more.
- Smile and look genuinely interested.
- Be alert and attentive.
- Be emotionally neutral.
- Listen with openness and objectivity.
- Positively reinforce the speaker's ideas and actions.
- Be interested in the speaker's needs.
- Use time lag in a productive manner.
- Resist external distractions.
- Pay attention to nonverbal communication and body language.
- Listen between the lines for hidden meanings.
- Use supportive and emotionally neutral language.
- Evaluate the content of the conversation, not the speaker's delivery.
- Practice effective listening.

Don'ts:

- Don't interrupt.
- Don't speak, except to acknowledge, summarize, or mirror back.
- Don't take the subject in another direction. Let the person speaking lead the direction of the conversation.
- Don't daydream.
- Don't be distracted.
- Don't multi-task.
- Don't interrogate.
- Don't preach.
- Don't give advice.
- Don't blame or attack.
- Don't be defensive.
- Don't use threatening or emotionally-laden negative language.
- Don't try to get the upper hand.
- Don't critique the speaker.

