



## Active Listening Skills

### Mirroring

Using an active listening technique called “mirroring” will improve your communication skills as it will help you become a better listener. Mirroring is when you repeat back what someone has said to you in your own words. When you use mirroring, you are showing the person that you are listening to that you are making an effort to understand what they are saying. It may take a few times of you mirroring back what the other person is saying before you fully understand what they are saying to you. **Make sure when you are finished mirroring that you say, “Is that right?” and “Is there anything else?”** This will give the other person the opportunity to tell you if you are misunderstanding what they are saying and if there is anything else that they need to communicate with you. When you are mirroring what the other person is saying, you are not agreeing with their opinion or perspective. You are simply trying to understand what they are trying to communicate to you.

#### *Ways to Start Mirroring Statements*

“It sounds like...”

“So what you’re saying is...”

If the speaker is saying a lot, it may be difficult for you to mirror back everything they said to you. In this case, make sure to stop them and check in. A polite and thoughtful way of doing this is, “I am trying to understand what you are saying. I need you to stop here and let me see if I have this right before you move on with what you are saying.” Then, continue to mirror what the other person said to you.

### Validation

To validate someone else is to acknowledge their emotions, thoughts, and perspective. Similarly to mirroring, validation does not mean that you are agreeing with the speaker. Using this technique helps prevent a dialogue or conflict from escalating as it is a technique that shows empathy. It allows the speaker to feel heard and understood even if you do not agree with their perspective.

#### *Examples of Validating Statements*

“It sounds like you are feeling angry right now.”

“I see that it was important to you that I helped you carry in the groceries today.”

“I hear that you are feeling frustrated that I was late again.”