

You're paying attention to your level of listening:

You're not listening. You're ignoring. Are you mad?

You're listening – but with only half an ear. You're thinking about other things at the same time. This is a barrier to developing the relationship.

You're focused on the other person. But you need to consciously push away other thoughts.

You're in "flow". You don't need to worry about what to say next because it will come from whatever the other person is saying and because you're totally focused on them.

You're asking the right questions:

Open: What/When/Who/Where/When

Probing: "Tell me more..."

Not the wrong ones:

Multiple: They'll remember the first or the last question and nothing in between.

Leading: "So do you want to....?"

You're minding your mind-set:

You're being non-judgemental, pushing aside any prejudices or dislikes and watching and waiting for the positives.

You're not being clever in the "I know exactly what s/he's going to say next and I've got the right answer" sense.

You're not allowing boredom to take over in the "I've heard it all before" sense; it might not be new to you – but not to your client.

You're developing empathy by trying to place yourself in their shoes and think about how you would respond in their situation.

You're demonstrating it in other ways:

You're reflecting key themes and emotions "You've mentioned this several times...it sounds important"; "You seem upset".

You're summarising regularly to make sure a) you've understood and b) you're still on track against the meeting's objective.

You're focused completely on the person (smartphone out of sight, appropriate body language, facial expressions, eye contact) for as long as your exchange lasts.

