

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

If you would like to make an appointment to see a counsellor to learn more about this topic, please contact the counselling service on your campus.

Distance students can contact any one of the campuses. Please tell the receptionist if you need an urgent appointment.

CONTACT DETAILS

ALBANY

Health and Counselling

Hours 8.30am - 5.00pm

Monday - Friday

Phone (09) 443 9783

Email: Studenthealth@massey.ac.nz

MANAWATŪ

Student Counselling Service

Turitea Campus, Palmerston North

Hours 8.30am - 5.00pm

Monday - Friday

Phone (06) 350 5533

Email: s.counselling@massey.ac.nz

WELLINGTON

Student Counselling Service

Hours 8.30am - 4.30pm

Monday - Friday

Phone (04) 801 2542

<http://crow.massey.ac.nz>

<http://health-counselling.massey.nz>

LISTENING

STUDENT COUNSELLING



LISTENING

Knowing how to listen is important for any effective communication. Whether in a lecture, tutorial, presentation or conversation you need to be able to focus on what the person wants to say and what they are asking from you. It involves several skills that can be learned.

HOW DO I LISTEN EFFECTIVELY?

PREPARE

Be aware of your own feelings and needs. Are you able to shut out distractions and focus on what this person is about to say?

LISTEN AND CLARIFY

Listen to the speaker's perspective, feelings and wants. If you don't feel as if you've clearly understood what they are saying, ask for clarification or more information.

Helpful phrases are "I'd just like to check that I've understood what you said correctly", or, "Just let me run this past you."

ACKNOWLEDGE

Communicate to the speaker that you've heard their point of view, for example, "It sounds like you are feeling very stressed at the moment." "You seem to be very worried about this assignment."

YOUR POSTURE

Make sure your posture indicates interest in what the person is saying. This can be done by facing the person, at an appropriate distance. Having relaxed arms and legs rather than crossing or folding arms or legs (like a barrier) helps.

APPROPRIATE BODY MOTION

Move in a synchronized way with the speaker. A very rigid, still position or too much fidgeting is distracting, and off-putting.

EYE CONTACT

Respect cultural differences. For Maori, Pacific Islanders and some other groups, direct eye contact may be considered offensive or aggressive. Be led by the speakers' comfort with eye contact.

Effective eye contact usually consists of "bursts" of eye contact with movement to other parts of the person's face or hands and looking away.

SUITABLE ENVIRONMENT

Make sure the environment is welcoming - avoid having physical barriers like desks in the way.

HOW DO I INDICATE I'M LISTENING?

USE DOOR OPENERS

These are non-coercive invitations to talk. Statements such as "Want to tell me about it?" "What seems to be bugging you?"

USE MINIMAL ENCOURAGERS

These are usually not so much words with content as sounds or movements that show the speaker you are interested in what they are saying.

Examples include "mmm.mm" "really"... "right"... "oh"... "ok" and nodding your head.

USE OPEN QUESTIONS

Open questions which require more than a "yes" or "no" answer.

Examples would be "how did you feel about that?" "What would you like to have had happen?"

Remember to only ask one question at a time.

USE ATTENTIVE SILENCE

By not jumping in as soon as the person stops talking you may give them the space they need to think over what was said, to feel different emotions and sometimes to express new ideas.



HOW DO I KNOW I'VE HEARD RIGHT?

USE PARAPHRASING—A REFLECTIVE SKILL

This means providing the person with a synopsis of what they were saying. It should contain the essence of what the speaker has been saying. This is a very powerful way of showing someone that you've heard them - and most importantly - understood them.

REFLECT BACK THEIR FEELINGS OR EMOTIONS

This is rather like being a mirror for someone. The idea is to go beyond the words they use and pick up on their feelings. Look at body language; listen to their tone of voice, think of how you might feel in their position.

Useful phrases include: "You seem pretty upset about...."; "it sounds like that shook you up quite a bit"; "I guess you're quite angry now."

REFLECT THE MEANING

This is an attempt to make some logical links for the speaker - trying to help them connect thoughts, events and feelings. For instance "you are upset because he had promised "x" and instead did "y."

SUMMARISE

At the end of a discussion, it is helpful to revisit the main issues discussed and add any outcomes to them: "It seems that there are relationship issues which you have been worrying about and you've decided to talk to someone at Student Counselling about them," or, "so you are going to approach your lecturer for an extension and you also feel you need to go and see the Centre for Teaching and Learning about that maths problem."

REMEMBER: Effective listening can be learned and improves with practice.