

Communication Tips

Active Listening:

- x Distancing Phrase – Starting out with a phrase such as “It sounds like ...” or “I think I’m hearing you say...” lets the speaker know that you are working to understand what they are saying.
- x Affirm and Reflect – Utilize empathy to acknowledge the emotions and intensity of the speaker. Summarize the key points and details that you heard them share.
- x Check-In – Ensure that your reflection has accurately captured what the person was trying to convey. Use phrases like “Is that right?” or “Is there anything I missed?”
- x Open Ended Questions – In order to dig deeper, ask open-ended questions about the issues and interests shared by the other person. Open-ended questions are questions that cannot be answered in one word. This calls upon the speaker to reflect on their own views, and helps the listener to better understand the perspective of the speaker

Example: Your roommate approaches you and begins shouting about how they have had to wash the dishes every night for the last week and take out the trash because it was spilling out of the can.

You could respond with...

“It sounds like you are feeling overwhelmed and disrespected and that fairness in how we share the responsibility of keeping the apartment clean is important to you. Did I get that right?”

And then follow up with...

“What would fairness look like in this situation?”

I-Statements:

- x Feelings – Articulate the emotions tied to a specific context. This helps the listener to recognize the impact that a situation is having on you.
Ex: I feel disrespected...
- x Topics – Describe the context that triggers those emotions. In doing so you can apply specificity to the situation instead of speaking in broad generalities.