

Module #2: Listening

Content Description

According to RAs that we interviewed, many believed that “listening is crucial. If an RA doesn’t listen to what another RA is saying, conflict ensues and chaos follows. Good group communication starts with listening to each other” (Nelson). This training module will take place in the morning on the second day of training and, following the day’s ice breaker activity, will last for approximately three hours. This part of the program will teach our trainees how to be effective and competent listeners by explaining all components associated with listening. The overall goal for the day’s module is to first explain what a listening barrier is, distinguish what kind of listener trainers tend to be/show them different types of listening, and then show them how to improve while giving them practice with their new skill knowledge set.

Objectives:

1. At the end of this program, trainees will be able to list listening barriers of communication and list methods to overcome them.
2. At the end of this program, trainees will be able to interpret messages with an open mind because they will be able to actively listen to their fellow staff members through eye contact and nonverbal body language.
3. At the end of this program, trainees will be able to provide effective feedback and respond appropriately to those with whom they are communicating.

Training Techniques and Methods

1. “Listen to Draw” Activity

This game is designed to have trainees experience the value of listening. In this game, trainees will pair up with a member on their staff. Each member of the pair will sit back-to-back. Once the pairs are sitting back-to-back, one partner will be given a piece of paper and a pen; the other partner will be given the name of an item (For list of items, see Appendix D). The person who was given the item will be told to explain to his/her partner how to draw the item without using the item’s name. (Example: If the item were a snowman, one partner would say “Draw a big circle. Draw a smaller circle on top of that circle, and then draw a smaller circle on top of that,” etc.) The partner who is drawing is not allowed to speak or ask questions to clarify. After both partners have had a chance to draw and speak, there will be a session of debriefing. In this game, trainees will realize that listening can be difficult, and the speakers will realize that clear communication is vital to helping someone understand you.

Medium:

- Drawing
- Discussion

2. What is listening? What is the difference between active and passive listening?

For this portion of the training, a video will be shown about active and passive listening, and trainers will demonstrate examples of how to be an active listener from a passive listener. ECC will then lecture about the roles an active and passive listener will play. Next, ECC will evaluate the RAs via a pre-made test (See Appendix 2) that analyzes whether they tend to be an active or passive listener. ECC will then play games with trainees that help them experience how to be a passive listener from an active listener.

Medium:

- Video
- Lecture
- Handout/Test

2. Listening barriers: What are different types of barriers, how do I recognize them, and how do I overcome them?

For this portion of the training, team members will watch a series of videos of RA staff interacting with one another and ECC trainers will act out skits and have trainees help them act. Each video will show RA staff members as ineffective listeners. Discussion will then occur in regards to why the staff members were ineffective and how the RAs feel improvement can occur. After the video is shown, ECC will dissect the clip and explain to the trainees the components of what went wrong and strategies to fix the events in the future.

Medium:

- Skits & Acting
- Video
- Discussion

3. What are ways to provide feedback to others while listening?

During this segment, ECC trainers will act out ways to achieve effective feedback when in a group setting. Next, the trainees will divide up into their perspective staffs and will be given a series of skits to act out, each involving how to give effective feedback. By doing skits, the RAs will get comfortable with how they communicate with one another as staff members and as individuals.

Medium:

- Watching and performing skits
- Discussion