

**Set the Stage and Gather Client Information**  
*Model Effective Communication*

**Term**  
Active listening

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An engaged form of listening that involves paying close attention, interpreting verbal and nonverbal cues, and offering thoughtful responses.

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Affirmation

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A counseling technique in which the counselor uses focused “you” statements (e.g., “you chose to...”) to validate the client’s specific traits, actions, experiences, or feelings in order to help the client feel more capable of accomplishing goals within their control and/or reinforce behaviors that align positively with their financial goals.

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Attending

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A type of focused listening that involves using verbal and nonverbal cues to indicate one is fully present and attentive when another person is speaking, especially in a counseling setting.

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Clarifying

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An interviewing technique in which the counselor asks questions or makes statements to help the counselor better understand the client’s actual intent.

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Decoding

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In the sender-receiver model, the process that a receiver uses to interpret a sender's message and make sense of it.

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Empathic listening

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The combination of paying close attention to a client's message while also working to understand the client's perspective to "see with" the client rather than "feeling for" the client.

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Encoding

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In the sender-receiver model, the process that the sender uses to express their intended message, which can take verbal and nonverbal forms.

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Encouragers

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Verbal and non-verbal cues used during conversations to show active listening and encourage continued sharing.

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Engaging

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The act of building rapport and fostering a connection to create and maintain a relationship.

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Feedback

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In the sender-receiver model, the receiver's response to the sender that provides the sender with information on the degree to which the message was understood. It is essential for overcoming noise.

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Message

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In the sender-receiver model, this is the content that is conveyed from the sender to the receiver and can take the form of verbal and nonverbal components.

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Noise

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Any distraction or interference that disrupts the effective transmission and reception of a message during communication.

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Nonverbal communication

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Any aspect of communication that is not spoken, such as facial expressions, pacing, posture, or gestures. They can have a significant impact on the meaning of the message, especially its emotional content.

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Pacing

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A communication technique where a counselor nonverbally and intuitively matches a client's tone, speed, intensity, and body language and/or verbally applies interviewing techniques that include restating, summarizing, and paraphrasing.

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Paraphrasing

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Restating a client's message in the counselor's own words to confirm understanding and show active listening.

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Reassurance

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In interviewing, this is a counterproductive communication method that involves indicating that a client will be okay or not to worry, which may be interpreted as condescending rather than comforting because it can minimize the client's concerns or dismiss their feelings or experiences.

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Receiver

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The person who is hearing a message or is otherwise getting and interpreting a message, and in a conversation or interview, this role will shift depending on who is listening.

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Reflecting

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An interviewing technique in which the counselor restates or paraphrases what the client said to guide the conversation, get clarification, or show empathy.

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Selective emphasis

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An interviewing technique used as part of reflecting to highlight specific aspects of a client's story to help guide the discussion or help the client gain insight. It should not be used to express judgment.

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Sender

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The person who initiates a communication and in a conversation or interview, this will refer to the person who is currently speaking or using other forms of communication.

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Sender-receiver model of communication

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A model that describes communication as a dynamic, two-way process that occurs whenever a person is speaking to a person who is listening. It addresses the process of the speaker encoding the message in words or another format, the noise that can distort the message, the process of decoding what the person said, and the feedback that the listener provides to indicate relative understanding when they become the speaker in turn.

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Summarizing

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A counseling skill that involves restating key points shared by the client to confirm understanding and allow for further reflection.