

ARTICLE 4

Committed Listening What it IS

Committed Listening is so critical and important that it is the most essential of all essential skills of an Executive Coach. It is the foundational skill for all communication skills.

“Committed listening transforms relationships and deepens learning. Its skillful use requires practice and discipline.” -Dennis Sparks

When we listen with commitment, we convey, “I care about what you have to say, and I’m listening with all my senses so that I fully understand an issue from your perspective. I am listening for both the content of the words and the emotions that resonate or peek out from behind the words. I am listening to hear the underlying beliefs and thinking that are occurring for the speaker as she or he continues to talk, as well as what she or he is creating and learning.”

As committed listeners, we listen to:

- gain clarity about an issue;
- understand the needs, perceptions, and emotions of the speaker;
- gather data for feedback;
- allow the speaker to refine thinking by speaking to an attentive listener;
- seek patterns of behavior; and
- lay a path for building responses and solutions.

Effective listeners monitor and manage their own listening skills by focusing their mental energies to committed listening. To listen with such intensity requires intentionally avoiding unproductive behaviors that interfere with the ability to hear and fully understand another.

Kee, K. (2017). *Results coaching next steps: Leading for Growth and Change*. Corwin A SAGE Company.