

ACTIVE LISTENING

When you attend fully, you are showing that you value the other person and what they have to say. If you do not do this, your attitude will be communicated, either subtly or overtly, to the other person and will affect their response to you and their perception of the organisation

The active listener:

1. Is self-aware and 'monitors' the impact they are having so that they can modify their approach if necessary
2. 'Listens' for the message behind the words and looks for non-verbal signs to confirm the message. In normal conversation, up to two-thirds of the meaning is transmitted on a verbal level and the remaining third on a non-verbal level through facial expression, hand movements, fidgeting, the inflection of the voice etc.
3. Recognises that silence is a potent form of communication. You should allow the other person time to think and should not rush to fill gaps.
4. Summarises and paraphrases the other person's comments to achieve greater understanding. By doing this, you will check your understanding of the answers, the other person can clarify things if s/he feels that you have not understood and will become more confident that they are being accurately judged.
5. Signals their attention. Non-verbal signs of attentiveness include eye contact, smiling, nodding in agreement, leaning forwards, using an open, relaxed manner etc.

For more information on the skills of active listening and to obtain a self assessment checklist please contact info@thestairway.co.uk