



# Mindful Communication

Communication is about responding to people in a thoughtful manner

When people sense you are not present during a conversation they may assume you:

- Do not agree with them
- Do not value what they are saying
- Do not value them

However, by engaging in mindful communication you can demonstrate your presence in a discussion, which leads to more effective and timely meetings.

Mindful communication requires one to engage in both mindful *listening* and mindful *speaking*

Mindful listening involves:

- An interest in what others say
- Avoiding making judgments
- Giving others our full attention

Mindful listening avoids:

- Interrupting
- Being focused on the self
- Planning a response while others are speaking

Some common roadblocks to mindful listening include:

- *Comparing* your experiences or thoughts to others
  - *Mind reading* and trying to predict what the speaker will say next
  - *Rehearsing* what you plan to say next
  - *Judging* what the speaker is saying before they have finished
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The goal of mindful listening is to understand what the speaker is trying to communicate

Tips for mindful listening:

- Refrain from speaking or leading the conversation
- Paraphrase what the speaker has said to show you were listening
- Ask for clarification when necessary
- If the speaker stops talking, give them space for silence, and be available to listen when they resume speaking

## Try This Activity to Build Your Mindful Listening Skills

*Identify your blocks to mindful listening*

- In what situations do you find yourself rehearsing? Judging? Distracted?
- Who are you talking to?
- What is the conversation about?

*Practice your skills*

Try filling in the table by paraphrasing and clarifying what the speaker says.

<b>What the speaker says</b>	<b>Paraphrase</b> <i>What I hear you saying is...</i>	<b>Clarify</b> <i>I hear you saying...Is that accurate?</i>
<i>I desperately need a vacation.</i>		
<i>I don't have time to meet with you this week.</i>		

The goal of mindful speaking is to stay on topic while observing how others are responding to what you're communicating. By observing others you can clarify your message as needed.

Mindful speaking is:

- Concise
- Specific
- Direct
- Truthful
- Authentic

Mindful speaking avoids:

- Tangents
- Disclaimers
- Rationalizations
- Hurtful comments
- Repetitions

When practicing mindful speaking in can be helpful to remember two acronyms:

**WAIT**

and

**THINK**

**Why Am I Talking?**

Is what I'm saying

**True**

**Helpful**

**Informative**

**Necessary**

**Kind**



US: SIGMA Assessment Systems, Inc. • PO Box 610757 • Port Huron MI • 48061-0757 • P: 800-265-1285 • E: support@sigmahr.com  
Canada: Research Psychologists Press, Inc. • PO Box 3292 Stn. B • London ON • N6A 4K3 • P: 800-401-4480 • E: support@sigmahr.com  
[www.SIGMAAssessmentSystems.com](http://www.SIGMAAssessmentSystems.com)