

Before You Respond

A quick listening check for better workplace conversations



Good listening doesn't mean slowing every conversation down. Use these five checks to make sure you understand what someone is really saying before you respond.

	Ask Yourself	Why It Matters
Hear the whole point	Am I listening to understand, or already preparing my response?	<i>You may miss information that changes how you should respond.</i>
Know what they need	Do they want an answer, a decision, advice, support, or a chance to talk it through?	<i>Knowing what they need helps the conversation move somewhere useful..</i>
Check your assumptions	Am I filling in any blanks instead of asking?	<i>One quick question can keep you from responding to the wrong issue.</i>
Reflect it back	Can I briefly confirm what I heard?	<i>Checking your understanding gives the other person a chance to clarify.</i>
Look a little deeper	Is the real issue about workload, priorities, timing, risk, or something else?	<i>Sometimes the first thing said isn't the whole issue.</i>

One last check: *do I understand enough to respond well?*

Make everyday conversations work better

Explore practical communication courses to help you reduce misunderstandings, ask better questions, and respond with more clarity.



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