



Harassment Counseling Office Newsletter

Column Message from a counselor

~Listening skills during communication~

Difficulties in communication is said to be one of the causes of harassment. It is vital to improve listening skills in order to prevent harassment.

One technique for listening to another person's feelings is the method proposed by American psychologist Carl R. Rogers called Active Listening. Communication requires not only understanding each other's feelings and thoughts but also comprehending and clarifying problems. There are various requirements for skillful listening, but the most important ones are listed below.

- 1) The listener is not required to produce a conclusion. That is the role of the other person. Simply having someone listen allows the speaker to work through their feelings and come to a conclusion in order to produce a solution themselves. What is important is not dispensing advice but (active) listening.
- 2) Do not try to solve the problem
The speaker is not looking for solutions but wants to be heard and understood. Trying to produce a quick solution can lead to saying something that denies the person's feelings and leaves them feeling misunderstood. Counseling requires aligning yourself with the speaker.
- 3) Recognize that someone who can't keep quiet and listen is not a good listener.
One-sided communication is like scolding a child. Speaking just to fill silence does not allow the other person to express themselves. Communication requires silence and patience.
- 4) Do not judge
People do things even when they know it is wrong. It is not possible to align yourself with a speaker if you make judgements. In particular, encouragement can be taken by the other person as rejection. Care is necessary.
- 5) Do not measure against your own experiences while listening.
Many people use their own experiences and built up knowledge while listening to someone else. As a result, it can become a value judgement. It is important to clear your own mind before listening to someone else.
- 6) Clarify whose problem it is.
When listening to a parent or third party, it is important to clarify whose problem it is.

The university staff and faculty have their own work and promoting or improving communication is not part of their duties. However, if problems arise because of a lack in communication then those abilities become necessary to carry out those duties. Working to improve listening skills is an excellent way to create a good work environment.

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