

LISTENING SKILLS A LIST FOR SESSION VISITORS

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2. Keep your own talk to a minimum. You are there to hear them most of all. You can't talk and listen at the same time.
3. Give them your full attention. Leave outside the meeting your own issues, comparisons with your congregation, your feeling about presbytery. Focus on them and their issues.
4. When someone is talking, focus on that person. When she or he has finished if it is appropriate, ask how others on the session react to what has been said. Notice whether there is a general feeling of agreement on a point.
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- Do they participate in Montreat conferences or in presbytery events?

7. Look for non-verbal messages that session members are giving.

- Do people look at you when you are speaking?
- Do people look at other speakers or avoid their eyes?
- Do people lean forward, seeming to participate actively in conversation or sit back looking disinterested?
- Who do people look at for confirmation, agreement with what they are saying?
- When the pastor or moderator speaks, are there nods of agreement? Do people avoid eye contact? Is there response in agreement or disagreement or no response to moderator's statements?

Non-verbal messages can mean many things. Pay attention to them. They can give you ideas for follow-up questions to ask. They can help you clarify your own understanding of what is happening in this session.

8. Reflect with the session on alternatives for dealing with needs and issues raised.

- Ask, "What can you do about this need?"
- Offer resources you know about
- Tell them that you will note the need or issue in your report to let the Committee on Ministry know so that someone from presbytery can follow up with resources.

9. You won't have time to deal with all you hear if you listen well. You can include anything important that you hear in your report to the Committee on Ministry. Please do, so that help can be offered so that the church's willingness to participate in the larger mission of its denomination can be honored.

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- When the pastor or moderator speaks, are there nods of agreement? Do people avoid eye contact? Is there response in agreement or disagreement or no response to moderator's statements?

Non-verbal messages can mean many things. Pay attention to them. They can give you ideas for follow-up questions to ask. They can help you clarify your own understanding of what is happening in this session.

8. Reflect with the session on alternatives for dealing with needs and issues raised.

- Ask, "What can you do about this need?"
- Offer resources you know about
- Tell them that you will note the need or issue in your report to let the Committee on Ministry know so that someone from presbytery can follow up with resources.

9. You won't have time to deal with all you hear if you listen well. You can include anything important that you hear in your report to the Committee on Ministry. Please do, so that help can be offered so that the church's willingness to participate in the larger mission of its denomination can be honored.

Your visit helps make our connectional system work. Thanks.

- Do they participate in Montreat conferences or in presbytery events?

7. Look for non-verbal messages that session members are giving.

- Do people look at you when you are speaking?
- Do people look at other speakers or avoid their eyes?
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