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| **FOCUS AREA** | **INFORMATION INTERVIEW** |
| **Activity** | **Practise active listening** |
| **Duration** | 60 minutes |
| **Learning outcomes** | *Topic Coordinator to map to learning outcomes* |
| **Resources needed** | * [Active listening video](https://flinders.instructuremedia.com/embed/d811c3cf-1254-4b02-815f-63d21895d206) [2.5 mins] * [Student worksheet](#WORKSHEET) |
| **Associated toolkit task** | [Interview and 800-1000 word reflective summary](https://staff.flinders.edu.au/content/dam/staff/learning-teaching/employabilty-toolkit/information-interview.docx) |

## Activity description

## Students will simulate information interviews through career conversations encouraging them to practise active listening and to develop questions to use in an information interview.

## PART A Practise active listening [30 minutes]

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Play **active listening video** and introduce active listening. | Active listening is:   * central to effective communication. * involves focusing completely on the speaker to understand their message. * demonstrates genuine interest in the other person’s insights and perspectives. * makes the other party comfortable and enhances their flow of communication. | [Active listening video](https://flinders.instructuremedia.com/embed/d811c3cf-1254-4b02-815f-63d21895d206) [2.5 mins] |
| 1. Introduce the 4 active listening skills that students will practise in the next exercise. | 4 active listening skills   1. Paraphrasing/summarising to ensure you have understood the message correctly (‘So what you’re saying is… ‘That’s interesting, so what I’m hearing is…’) 2. Asking open ended questions (questions that can’t be answered with a yes or no, for example ‘Could you tell me a bit more about XX?’) 3. Short verbal affirmations (I see, I understand, uh-huh, mmmm, I see) 4. Non-verbal active listening skills (nodding, smiling, eye contact) |  |
| Small group exercise | 1. Using **student worksheet (PART A)** students will work in groups of three holding three separate career conversations. | * The Listener should ignore outside factors and put their own thoughts on hold. | [Student worksheet (PART A)](#PARTA) |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Lead students to discuss what they learned from the activity. | * What active listening skills assisted the communication process? * What aspects were challenging or surprising? * Did The Listener feel like they wanted to interject at any time to add their own experience or lose focus? * Did The Interviewee feel ‘heard’? * What was it like as The Recorder? How much of The Interviewee story were you picking up while concentrating on The Listener? |  |

## PART B Plan information interview questions [20 minutes]

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Prompts** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led | 1. Introduce the information interview purpose | An information interview:   * is an informal conversation with someone with experience and knowledge in your sector of interest * focuses more broadly on how to get started in the sector, seek insights on a career path, an industry, an organisation, an occupation and/or general career advice * not a job interview ̶ your purpose is not to ask for a job |  |
| 1. Lead a discussion connecting active listening to information interviews | Why is active listening an essential skill for information interviews?   * Demonstrates genuine interest and builds rapport * Makes the other party feel comfortable and understood * Increases your understanding of the topic and broadens your knowledge and perspective * May lead to good outcomes for you! |
| Small group exercise | 1. Using **student worksheet (PART B)** students will prepare 7 questions that would be useful to ask in an information interview | Sample 7 questions   1. What led you to choose this career? 2. Could you describe for me what a normal day in your job is like? 3. What qualifications do you need to enter your occupation? 4. How would you describe the culture at your place of work? 5. What can I read or watch to keep up with developments in your field? 6. What do you like most / least about what you do? 7. What skills and personality traits do you think are most important to being successful in this field? 8. What advice would you give to someone considering a career in this field? | [Student worksheet (PART B)](#PARTB) |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Students share questions back to the main group |  |  |

## PART C Conduct an information interview with the facilitator [10 minutes]

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| **Format** | **Steps** | **Resources** |
| Facilitator-led discussion | 1. Encourage students to ask you (the facilitator) 1-2 information interview questions they generated in **student worksheet (**[**PART B**](#PARTB)**)** 2. Encourage volunteers to use their active listening skills to summarise what they learnt from you | [Student worksheet (PART B)](#PARTB) |

## Tips for teaching staff

PART A could work with students in pairs with The Interviewee providing feedback at the end about The Listener’s active listening skills.



**STUDENT WORKSHEET**

**PART A Practise active listening**

**Instructions**

1. Allocate the three roles:

* The Listener
* The Interviewee
* The Recorder

**The conversation**

1. The Listener introduces themselves and asks The Interviewee about their career goals:

* What led you to choose this course? Were there any key influences?
* Were there any surprises for you when you started studying in this field?
* What do you like the most and least about studying in this field?

1. While the conversation is taking place, The Recorder will note the active listening skills that The Listener demonstrates in the checklist below.

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| **Active listening skills checklist** | | |
| **Skill** | **Example** | **Observations** |
| Short verbal affirmations | I see, I understand, uh-huh, mmmm |  |
| Non-verbal active listening skills | Nodding, smiling, eye contact |  |
| Asking open ended questions | Questions that can’t be answered with a yes or no, for example ‘Could you tell me a bit more about XX?’ |  |
| Paraphrasing | ‘So what you’re saying is… ‘That’s interesting, so what I’m hearing is…’ |  |
| Other |  |  |

1. The Listener summarises what they have heard.
2. The Recorder provides feedback on the active listening skills that The Listener demonstrated.

**Reflection**

1. All students can then reflect on the process:
   * Did The Speaker feel ‘heard’? Did The Listener find it challenging?

**Swap roles until each student has had a turn at each role.**

**PAR****T B Plan information interview questions**

Working in the same small groups as PART A, prepare seven questions that would be useful to ask if you were to conduct an information interview with someone working in your target sector/career. These may relate to seeking advice for entering the sector, learning about career pathways, their role and about their organisation etc.

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| **Information interview questions** | |
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