

Social Intelligence

Listen and Watch More

By watching and listening more, we are able to better monitor the behaviors of others as well as our own since we are not focused mainly on ourselves. By focusing on the other person and their actions, we can develop better listening skills and catch more information than if we tried to assume it all ourselves.

Tips for better listening:

- Listen for verbal cues
- Watch for nonverbal cues
- Focus on what is being said, not the person
- Be aware of your own behaviors and reactions

Always Keep Your Cool

Keeping our cool in tight or stressful situations can be tough and takes a lot of skill to make it through gracefully. It is perfectly normal to feel embarrassed or hurt when someone does something you don't like, such as speaking rudely to you or pointing out a mistake you made. Our first instinct is to possibly lash out at them or try to retaliate by hurting them in return. But the key to strong and professional communication is to keep your cool at all times and not let the negative feelings take over. When something happens that may send you over the edge, take a minute to reflect on what was said and what happened. If needed, you should step away for a few moments to compose yourself.

Tips for keeping your cool:

- Try not to take words personally
- Stop and reflect *what* was said, not *how* it was said
- Make a note to learn from this experience
- Ask yourself if the person had reason for what was said – if so, what can you do to change it?

Conversation Topics

Sometimes when we speak among other people in social situations, the lines of safe conversation topics can become blurry. We can become too comfortable and begin talking about subjects that can seem fine to some people, but can be offensive or rude to others. It is usually recommended to stick with topics that are considered 'safe' for everyone, such as common work areas or hobbies.

Topics to avoid in a group:

- Religion
- Politics
- Personal health
- Prejudice topics (racism, sexism, etc.), including jokes