

## THE ART OF REFLECTING BACK

Using a technique called 'reflecting back' can quickly help you become a far more effective listener. When reflecting back, you will repeat back what you think you have heard someone say to you, but in your own words.

This shows that you didn't just hear the other person, but you are trying to understand them. Reflecting back what another person says can feel funny at first. You might think the other person will be annoyed at you for repeating them.

However, when used correctly, reflecting back will 9 times out of 10 receive a positive reaction and play a pivotal part in driving a conversation forward.

Here's an example:

*Reflecting back is a great way to improve communications. This worksheet gives an overview of how to use reflections (see the example), followed by practice statements on the next page.*

**Speaker:** 'I get so angry when you spend so much money without telling me. We're trying to save for a house!'

**Listener (Reflecting back):** 'We're working hard to save for a house, so it's really frustrating when it seems like I don't care.'

### QUICK TIPS:

**TIP 1)** The tone of voice you use for reflecting back is crucial. Use a tone that will allow what you say to come across as an 'uncertain' statement. Your goal is to express: 'I think this is what you're telling me, but correct me if I'm wrong.'

Your reflecting back statements don't have to be perfect. If the other person corrects you, that's good! Now you have a better understanding of what they were initially trying to say.

**TIP 2)** Focus on reflecting back the main point. Don't worry too much about all the minor details, especially if the speaker had a lot to say!

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**Although practice will never make perfect, it will make you permanently better than what you've ever been before!**

Use the following practice statements to structure a response that will allow you to reflect back what you think the other person might be saying.

(Reflecting back is such an important social skill because when people misinterpret what others are saying, unfair judgements can often be made that stand to potentially destroy the trust and communications in a relationship).

**Speaker:** 'I was in a bad mood yesterday because work has been so stressful. I just can't keep up with everything I have to do.'

**You (Reflecting back):**

**Speaker:** 'I feel like I'm doing all of the work around the house. I need you to help me clean and do the dishes more often.'

**You (Reflecting back):**

**Speaker:** 'I've been worried when you don't answer your phone. I always think something might've happened to you.'

**You (Reflecting back):**

**Speaker:** 'I don't understand what she wants from me. First she says she wants one thing, then another.'

**You (Reflecting back):**