



Paraphrasing: Quick Reference Sheet



**Aspen Family
Business Group**

The AFBG Golden Rule

Paraphrasing is reflecting your understanding. If you practice the following listening rule, your listening ability will improve 100%. After hearing someone complete a statement, reflect your understanding of the message to confirm that you have accurately heard the speaker before adding your perspective or response.

Paraphrasing, the most common reflective response, is simply re-stating another's message in your own words.

When you paraphrase you:

- Let that individual know that you are interested in understanding accurately his perspective, thereby demonstrating your interest and concern for him.
- Verify that your understanding is correct or can revise it if you have misunderstood.
- Let the person know that her message has been received, so that she no longer needs to press her perspective and, typically, will be more open to listening to yours. You reduce defensiveness and build trust.
- Demonstrate your understanding, rather than claiming it.
- Allow for a topic to be heard so that you can move on to other items.

Or you may give an example that illustrates the speaker's point (called "advancing a tentative example"). For instance, "Would a pin-striped suit without cuffs be the type of apparel you are recommending?" If the speaker responds with "Exactly!" you know that you have heard him correctly.

When you paraphrase, in essence you are testing yourself.

Most of us pay closer attention to a teacher's words when we know that we are going to be tested. Thus, if you commit yourself to the "AFBG Golden Rule" and practice regular reflective responses, you will find that you are paying closer attention to the speaker as if you were taking a test. You will also find that this practice increases your ability to

overcome distractions, to determine what meaning the speaker attributed to her words and to refrain from interrupting.

Paraphrasing is important even when you think the statement you have heard is simple or straight forward. Your judgment may be based on misunderstanding. Even if you “go overboard” with paraphrasing you probably won’t be doing it as often as needed. The experience of hundreds of participants in my Listening Skills Workshops indicates that paraphrasing increases effectiveness, efficiency, and relationships on and off the job.

So, what you are saying is that we should paraphrase whenever we listen to anyone? “Exactly!”

Reference sheet

Pay careful attention to:

- What the speaker is saying,
- How the speaker is delivering the message,
- And then, in your own words, reflect what you have heard.

Examples:

“So, what are saying is...”

“In summary, then, you...”

“What I hear you saying is...”

“In other words...”

Get in touch

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US VIA EMAIL.

Leslie Dashew: leslie@aspenfamilybusiness.org

Donnel Nunes: donnel@aspenfamilybusiness.org



Empowering family businesses of all sizes