

## Ears to hear: handout 1

Examples of poor skills	Examples of better skills
not listening to various cues, signals	listening carefully, taking up issues
butting in, interrupting	allowing space, and some pauses
making assumptions, 'knowing' or assuming answers	seeking the individuals answers, extending the scope of the interview by offering possible links
trying to influence, or providing own solution, manipulative	shaping the interview, but encouraging the person to come to their own solution
asking leading or closed questions, and asking two questions at one time	asking open questions, questions which draw out more information, avoiding questions with yes/no answers
being threatening, heavy handed, devaluing and defensive; officious, pressurising, sarcastic and sexist	being friendly, gentle, sincere, encouraging, genuinely interested
showing lack of empathy, unable to acknowledge the true feelings	showing strong empathy and compassion
offering unrealistic promises / choices	offering realistic and rational assessment of genuine choices
speaking too much, too hurriedly, not allowing time for answers	slowing the pace down, especially when there are signs of panic; making space for each person to think
wandering away from painful material; changing the subject	helping painful material to be expressed and picking up difficult issues
being critical and shocked	being positive even if feeling surprised
being patronising, talking down	not pretending to know when in fact doesn't know
being eager to get the information or outcome which the interviewer wants	clarifying issues, and alternative actions but ensuring choice is with the other
putting words into the other's mouth	using person's own words to reflect back, repeat, recap, and sum up
making the person out to be peculiar	showing how others might feel the same way
incongruous sharing of experience ('I get fed up too ...')	using own experience without revealing it, to reach others experience
inviting disloyalty to other people; running down (or defending too quickly) a third party	allowing different feelings to be expressed even if not agreeing; assuring confidentiality and discretion (where appropriate)

*Swift to Hear* by Michael Jacobs (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) SPCK, 2000 pp12-13 (leaving out some examples that applied specifically to the "at work" context of the second dialogue in the book)