###### **HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER**

* + - **Avoid distractions.** Look the other person in the eye and put your phone away.
    - **Slow down.** Our brains process thoughts four times faster than spoken words. It’s easy to skip ahead in a conversation, using your assumptions to fill in the gaps and plan your response. Resist this urge. Focus on what is actually being said.
    - **Don’t interrupt.** Take the time to hear the full story.
    - **Keep an open mind.** Don’t assume you already know what someone cares about. People will surprise you.
    - **Don’t fish.** Avoid leading questions like “Don’t you agree that...”
    - **Practice empathy.** Sometimes people need to let off steam. Don’t discourage them. Your immediate task is to hear what they have to say, not to judge.
    - **Show that you hear what they’re saying.** React, ask follow-up questions, and repeat back what you understood. If you don’t understand, ask.
    - **Find common ground.** You don’t have to agree with every point, but look for areas of agreement, and acknowledge where you differ.
    - **Don’t feel you need to sell something.** An organizer is not a salesperson. You’re genuinely looking to learn the other person’s point of view and create something new together.