

## **Activity**

### **Reflective listening – practising reflective listening**

#### **Purpose**

To make reflective listening part of your normal repertoire of skills.

#### **Description**

How to use everyday conversations to practise reflective listening.

#### **Instructions**

As Paul Lalgée says, reflective listening can seem unnatural because it is not something we do much in our everyday conversations. But what is to stop you doing more? Try the following.

- When you are deep in discussion with colleagues and you want your point of view to be heard, take a step back. Listen intently to what someone else is saying and reflect back something of what you hear.
- The next time you find yourself in a conversation in which you and the other person are expressing very different perspectives on something that is important to you both, step back from arguing. Instead of trying to find evidence to contradict their point of view, try reflecting back to them what they are saying. Keep on doing this, interspersed with a question or two, until they are satisfied that you have heard them accurately. You might then find two things have happened: they are more willing to listen to your point of view – and you have a much deeper understanding of theirs.

#### **Watch out for...**

If you do nothing but listen reflectively, you will begin to sound artificial and the other person will begin to suspect what you are doing. Add open questions and a summary where appropriate, to keep the conversation on track.