"La mayoría de las personas no escuchan con la intención de entender; Escuchan con la intención de responder. Están hablando o se están preparando para hablar".

HABILIDADES CLAVE DE ASESORAMIENTO

EXPLICADO

– Steven R. Covey

¡Sí, es verdad! Cuando la mayoría de las personas escuchan, están filtrando lo que se dice y preparándose para responder con sus propias interpretaciones o agenda.

Escuchar para comprender requiere paciencia y un cierto conjunto de habilidades que, cuando se aplican correctamente, facilitan una comunicación clara y una comprensión profunda.

A continuación, se enumeran las formas más comunes de habilidad utilizadas para escuchar y responder

de manera efectiva.

# [Atención](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/the-meaning-of-attending/)

Estar preparado para escuchar sin prisas. Asegurándote de que tu cliente pueda ver y sentir que tiene

toda tu atención en el tiempo que tienen juntos.

Esto se puede demostrar mediante el uso apropiado del contacto visual\* y palabras afirmativas como:

1. **ala** – exclamación de descubrimiento o realización
2. **uh huh** – interjección que significa comprensión.

La asistencia también se puede demostrar por otros aspectos del lenguaje corporal, como tener una postura abierta (sin piernas ni brazos cruzados), inclinarse un poco hacia el cliente y relajarse.

# [Construyendo el rapport](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/rapport/)

Las habilidades avanzadas de **atención.** Incluyen ofrecer **empatía**; tener una actitud acogedora y respetuosa; ser una persona cálida, genuina y real en la relación; y, lo más importante, no juzgar a su cliente.

Establecer una buena relación lleva tiempo, y los elementos clave de este proceso incluyen prepararse

bien para las sesiones, garantizar que el entorno sea seguro y ordenado, recordar información clave sobre el cliente y reflejar.

# [Silencio](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/silence/)

Es quizás la más subestimada de todas las habilidades de asesoramiento. Se puede utilizar en cualquier momento durante la sesión. Sin embargo, es muy efectivo al comienzo de la sesión cuando el cliente está hablando de sus problemas o dificultades en la vida.

El uso del silencio tiene dos funciones principales:

1. Permite al cliente contar su historia y sentirse escuchado y validado.
2. Permite al orientador obtener una comprensión más profunda de los problemas de la persona que está hablando, al tiempo que proporciona un espacio útil para que el orientador considere las respuestas apropiadas a la historia del cliente.

El silencio puede ser incómodo para algunas personas (tanto clientes como consejeros inexpertos). Es importante explorar durante el entrenamiento cómo te sientes con respecto al silencio y ser sensible a cualquier incomodidad que pueda sentir el cliente.

# [Parafrasea](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/reflecting-and-paraphrasing/)r

Esta habilidad es utilizada por el terapeuta para reflejar los puntos clave de la historia del cliente. A veces se describe como "sostener un espejo" al cliente para que pueda escuchar sus palabras repetidas.

Esta habilidad tiene tres funciones:

* 1. Le permite al cliente saber que estás prestando atención y "escuchando".
	2. El cliente puede estar seguro de que usted lo ha escuchado y le da la oportunidad de

corregir o agregar información.

* 1. Da la oportunidad al cliente de escuchar el poder de sus propias palabras.

Example:

Client Valerie: *‘My father is very ill and I am worried. He lives a long way away and I will have to get the train to see him. I really cannot afford the fare as I have very little money at the moment.’*

Counsellor Adeela: *‘You are concerned about your father’s health. Travelling to see him is giving you money worries as well.’*

Be thoughtful that paraphrasing is rewording the client’s story in your own words. Avoid repeating back what’s said word for word – that’s not paraphrasing. That’s *parrot-phrasing!*

# [Reflecting](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/reflecting-and-paraphrasing/)

Reflecting is a skill that can be used in conjunction with paraphrasing. This skill picks up on the emotion shown by the client as they are telling their story.

Example:

Client Valerie *(clenching her fists):* ‘*I don’t know why my father chose to live so far away from me when he knew how ill he was going to become.’*

Counsellor Adeela: ‘*You seem angry at your father for moving so far away.’*

Client Valerie: ‘*I am. I now have to travel halfway across the country to see him. He is so selfish.’*

In the above interaction, you can see how reflecting and paraphrasing work together.

Reflection can also take the form of using the client's own words to reflect back what they have said. To avoid parrot-phrasing, it is important to pick out just the key words; focusing on the words that convey emotion is usually a good strategy here.

# [Empathy](https://counsellingtutor.com/empathy-in-counselling/)

Sometimes referred to as ‘the frame of reference’, it is the client’s unique world view. By being empathic and emotionally ‘walking in the client’s shoes’, a counsellor understands both the narrative and the felt emotion experienced by the client. This skill is sometimes referred to as *‘listening to the music behind the words*’.

Self-awareness (gained through personal development) is vital here in order to avoid getting 'pulled into' your own material, and so slipping back into your frame of reference.

# [Focusing](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/focusing/)

Is a useful skill if a client brings lots of issues to the session. By asking the client which issue is most pressing, the counsellor and the client have a clear understanding of what is being worked with. Usually, when the major issue is the ‘focus’ of the work, other issues tend to fade away or resolve themselves.

Sometimes, especially if the client feels relief to finally have the opportunity to share their difficulties, they may pour out many issues very rapidly. This is particularly common during a first session. Focusng is valuable here, but you may not be able to use it straight away: the client may need first to pour everything out. Do of course tell them, though, if their pace is too fast for you to be able to attend properly.

# [Clarifying](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/clarifying-and-questions/)

Sometimes clients give a lot of information all at once that makes perfect sense to them but can be confusing for the counsellor to understand. Clarifying is a skill that uses a question to help the counsellor get a better understanding of the client’s story.

Example:

Client Valerie: ‘*Tom has always been selfish.*’

Counsellor Adeela: ‘*Who is Tom?*’

Client Valerie: ‘*Tom is my father’s name.*’

While it may feel difficult to 'interrupt' a client's story to clarify their meaning, it demonstrates that you really want to understand fully. It is also much easier to clarify at the time than to let the client continue and then to end up not understanding (or even misunderstanding) their story.

# [Use of Questions](https://counsellingtutor.com/counselling-open-questions/)

In counselling, questioning should be used with the skill of clarifying and understanding, not to probe or interrogate the client. If questions are used, they should be open, not closed, questions.

Examples:

**Closed question** – ‘*Are you feeling sad today?’*

**Open question** – ‘*How are you feeling today?’*

By using open questions, you allow the client to speak more about the issues as opposed to responding to a closed question with a yes or no answer.

Always check in with your yourself before asking a question, to ensure that your reason for asking is in the client's service and not, for example, to satisfy your own curiosity. It's a good idea too to avoid 'why' questions, which can sound judgemental of the client's actions, decisions etc.

# [Summarising](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/summarising/)

This skill is used towards the end of the session and is effectively a longer paraphrase. It is a useful way for the counsellor to reflect the key points of the session before bringing it to a respectful close.

Try to keep the summary brief, but meaningful and a true reflection of the material that the client has brought to the session.

Summarising can also be used to start a second or subsequent section, showing that you recall the previous session and reminding the client of previous work. It is important, however, not to make the client feel that they must continue the same thread (unless perhaps you are working in an active-directive modality).

# [Immediacy](https://counsellingtutor.com/basic-counselling-skills/immediacy/)

Feltham and Dryden (1993: 88) describe immediacy as ‘the key skill of focusing attention on the here and now relationship of counsellor and client with helpful timing, in order to challenge defensiveness and/or heighten awareness’.

Using immediacy means that the therapist reveals how they themselves are feeling in response to the client.

Finally…

Listening to understand instead of listening to respond, is the basis of forming a trusting, mutually respectful relationship in which clients feel safe and secure enough to discuss difficult issues. When this happens and the above skills are used properly, clients can see and embrace the changes in their lives.

**\*Eye contact** - In Western cultures, looking someone in the eye is seen as a sign of honesty, integrity or undivided attention. In certain Asian cultures, however, it can be seen as a sign of disrespect or rudeness.

When using counselling skills, always be culturally aware.