Chapter Seven
Fostering Communication

Productive Listening Skills

Great communication skills require avoiding negative listening habits such as:
- Thinking of solution while listening to someone else speaking
- Prying for details about what is unimportant to the theme of a conversation
- Dwelling mentally on a personal experience related to what is being described

Equally important, it is helpful to practice active listening habits. Active listening means focusing fully on the speaker’s message without distraction by doing the following:

- **Asking clarifying questions**
  *(describe a situation that would be improved with a more intentional effort in asking clarifying questions)*

- **Reframing the conversation**
  *(describe a situation that would be improved with more of an intentional effort in reframing a conversation)*

- **Closing our mind to other thoughts**
  *(describe a situation that would be improved with more of an intentional effort in closing our mind to other thoughts)*