

Communication and Verbal Skills

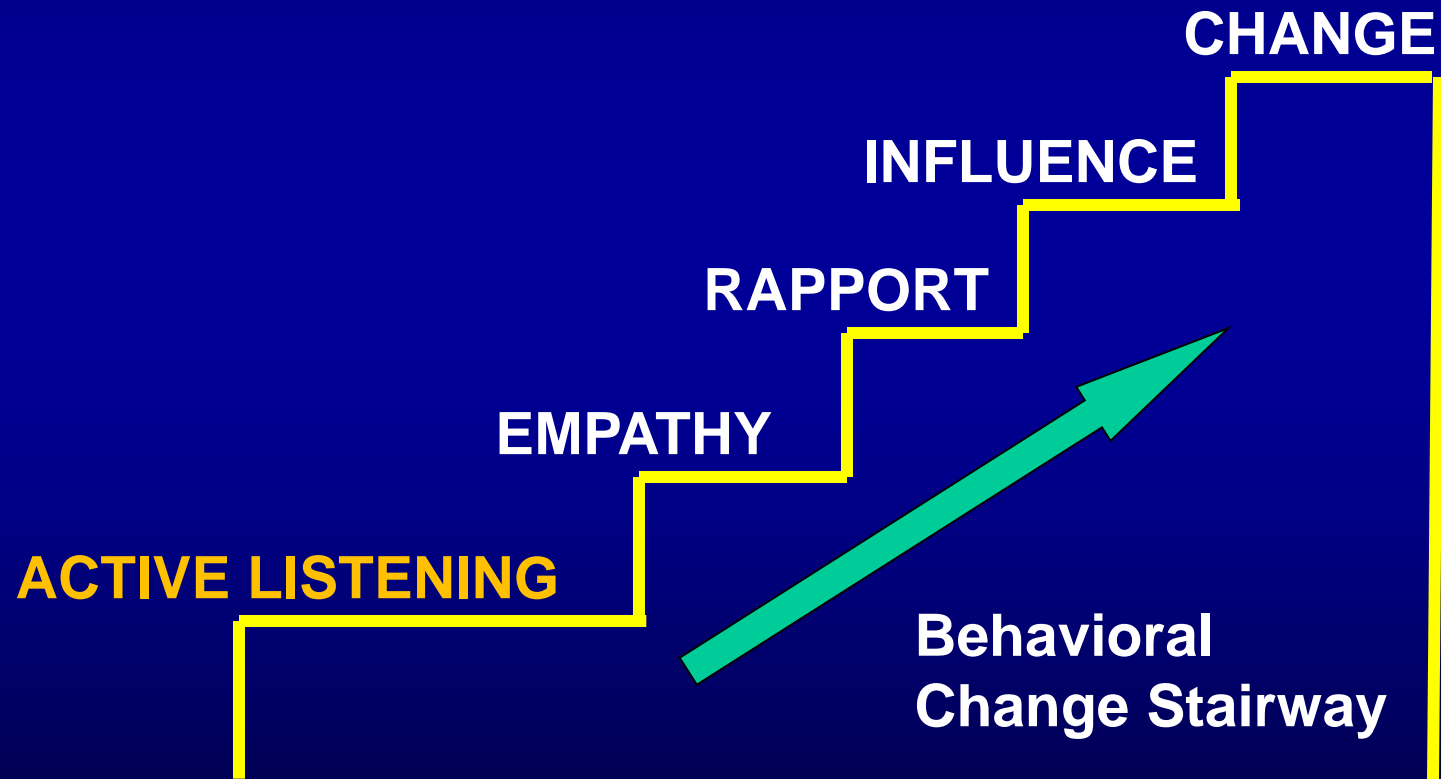
Practical Applications

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The CIT Officer's: Influencing Behavioral Change



Active Listening is the foundation that supports everything else

Empathic Understanding: Essential Skill for the CIT Officer



“To my mind, empathy is in itself a healing agent... because it releases, it confirms, it brings even the most frightened person into the human race. If a person is understood, he or she belongs.”

Carl Rogers

Empathic Understanding

- Refers to the ability to understand another's concerns and feelings
- Sets the stage for successful crisis resolution
- Is not sympathy
- Requires the ability to *attend* to another
- Requires 2 skills: *Restatement & Reflection*

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Facilitative Active Listening

- **Focusing your total mental power on the world of the person in crisis**
- **Attending to all the verbal and nonverbal messages**
- **Picking up on the person's readiness to enter into positive emotional contact with the CIT Officer**
- **Modeling attending behaviors**

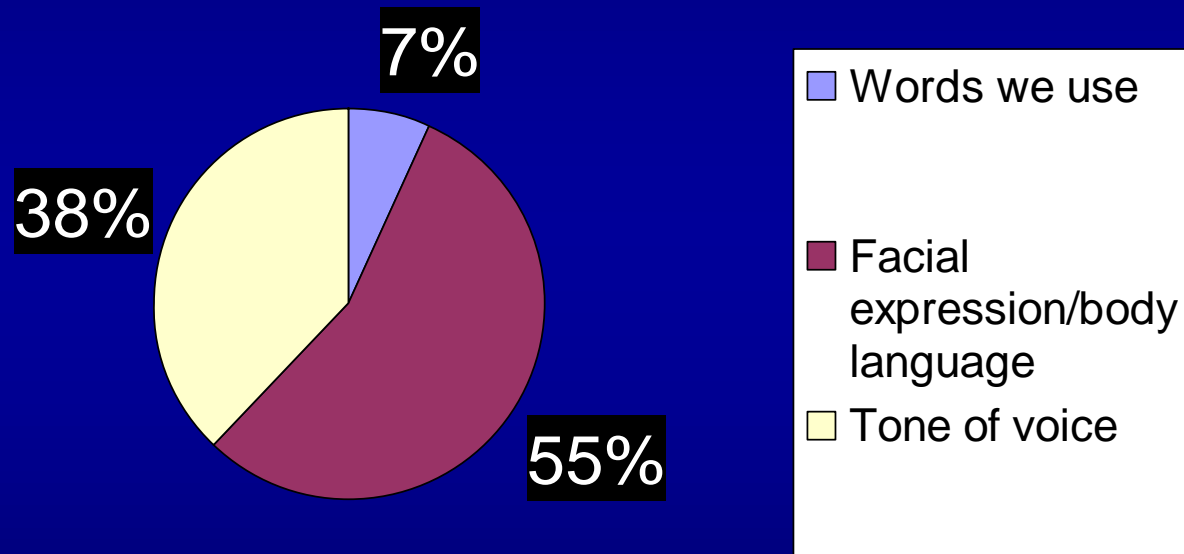
70%

70% of people's efforts to communicate about emotional issues are misunderstood, rejected, or unheard.

Mehrabian's Rule

- Albert Mehrabian established the importance of three elements in any face-to-face encounter:
 1. Words used
 2. Tone of voice
 3. Body Language
- There must be congruence among all three elements for effective communication

Communication About Emotions



Active Listening Skills

- Attending
- Restatement
- Reflection
- Open-ended questions
- Minimal Encouragers
- Effective Pauses
- Silence

What Active Listening is Not

- Advice, Judgment or Persuasion
 - Not your ideas or what you have done in similar situations
 - Do not inject your values (advice) into the situation
- Discussion of topics not expressed by the subject

The subjects feelings, values, life style, statements and opinions are what count

Attending

Focusing your attention completely on the person in crisis

- Words used by person in crisis
- Rate of speech
- Tone of voice
- Facial expression
- Body language

Restatement

Restating or *Feeding Back* the facts of the person's crisis situation

Person in Crisis:

“I stopped taking my medicine after I was fired and I’m sleeping in my car.”

CIT Officer:

“You recently stopped taking your medicine, you lost your job, and you don’t have a place to stay.”

Restatement

- The Facts

Consumer: *“I started back using and me and my old lady went to fighting. She left me. I didn’t go in today. It was my last chance. I’m fired. It’s just not worth it anymore.”*

CIT: *“Let me see if I understand. You’ve been using again and you and your wife have been fighting. You lost your job. And you want to give up.”*

Accurate Reflection

Reflecting or *Feeding Back* the person's feelings about the crisis

Person in Crisis:

“I’m afraid of sleeping in the car. How can I ever get a room without money?”

CIT Officer:

“You’re feeling scared and depressed because you don’t have any money and no place to stay.”

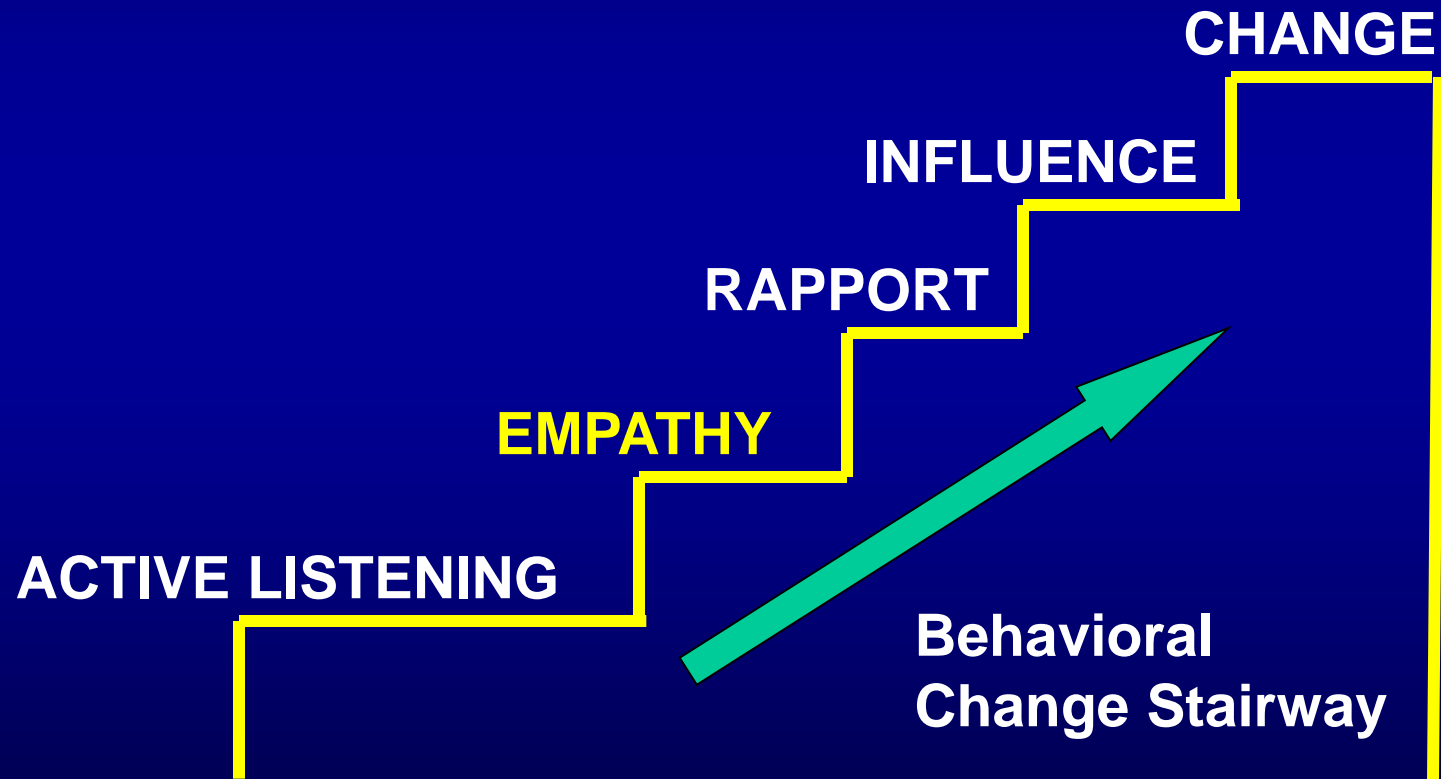
Reflection

- The Feelings

Consumer: *“I’m a real fuck up. I had two years. I was going to meetings. My wife and I were doing okay. Work was good. I can’t do anything right.”*

CIT: *“You sound embarrassed and pretty hopeless about getting your life back together.”*

The CIT Officer's: Influencing Behavioral Change



Active Listening is the foundation that supports everything else

Empathy: An Essential Concept

- “Identification / understanding of another’s situation, feelings and motive.”

Understanding is Not Agreement

Empathy: An Essential Concept

- Empathy is not Sympathy
 - Sympathy - “...an expression of pity or sorrow for the distress of another...”

American Heritage Dictionary
 - Pity and sorrow are not productive
- It's not necessary to actually “*feel what they feel*” to provide empathy

Communicating Empathy

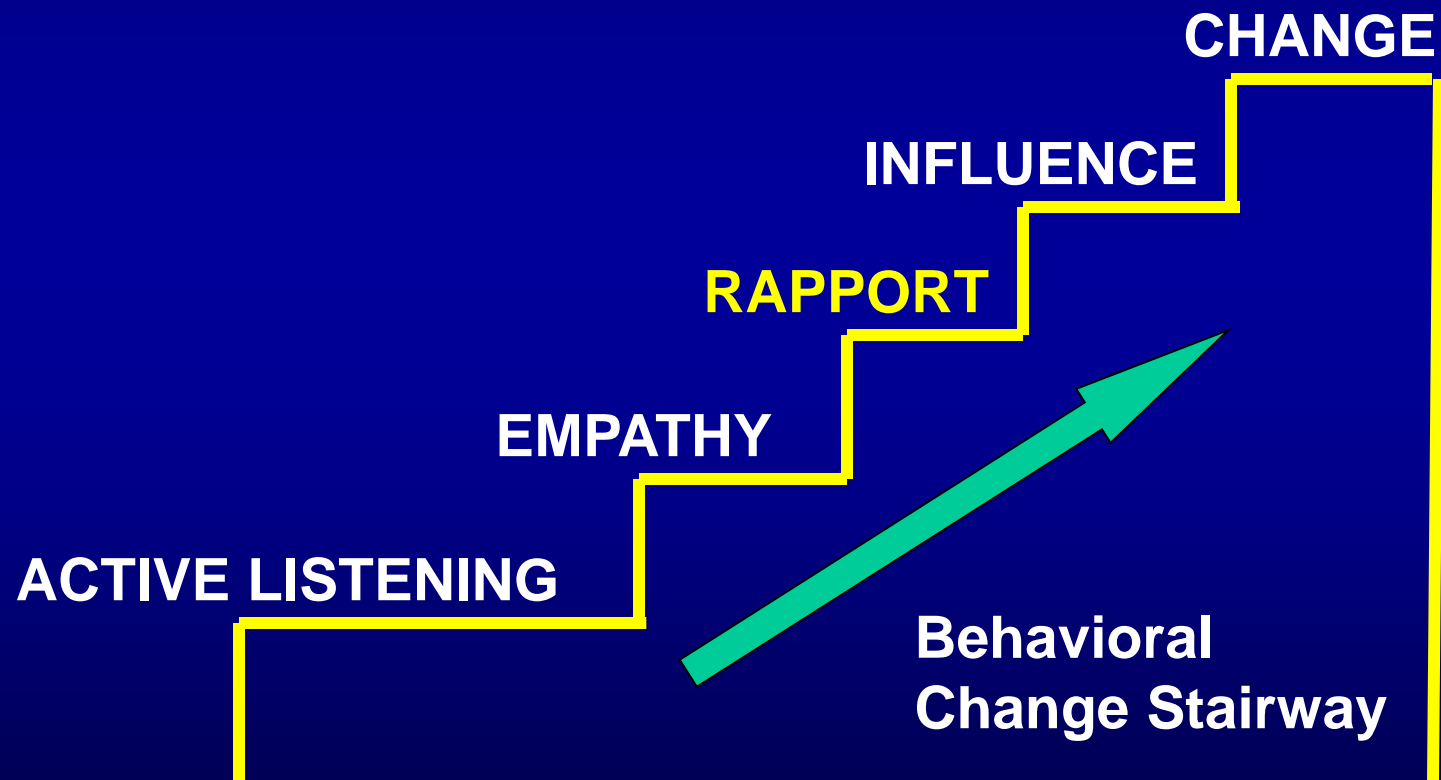
Learning how it feels to be the person in crisis involves three skills:

- 1. Attending to all verbal and nonverbal messages**
- 2. Accurate restatement of the person's message**
- 3. Accurate reflection of the person's feelings**

Communicating Genuineness

- The CIT Officer is role free
- The CIT Officer is spontaneous and adaptable to changing situation
- The CIT Officer's words and gestures are consistent and instill confidence in the consumer, family members,
- The CIT Officer stays in the “here and now”

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Rapport

Relationship of mutual trust



Phrases That Damage Rapport

- **“Calm Down”**

- This may be perceived as an order which may provoke intense anger.

- **“I Understand”**

- Often the phrase that others use to interrupt them in order to jump into problem solving.
- Often is a well intentioned, but counter-productive shortcut.
- You may in fact understand, however understanding must be demonstrated through Active Listening to maintain rapport.

Phrases That Damage Rapport

- **“Why?”**
 - Feels accusatory, creates defensiveness.
- **“You Should”**
 - A judgmental (advice giving) statement. Implies a superiority of the advice giver and may cause the receiver to feel inadequate.
- **“You Shouldn’t”**
 - Ditto

Communicating Acceptance

Person in Crisis

- Fearful
- Anxious
- Angry / hostile
- Insecure
- Paranoid
- Acting strangely
- Speaking bizarrely
- Poor personal hygiene

CIT Officer

- Respectful Introduction
- “Please”
- “Thank you”
- Smiling when appropriate
- Considers: “What if this person in crisis were a member of my family?”
- Demonstrates **courage**

Courage

“Each time someone stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.”

Robert F. Kennedy

