



VALOR

Preventing Violence Against Law Enforcement
and Ensuring Officer Resilience and Survivability

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

Scenario-Based Skills Training – De-escalation Communication Skills

Law Enforcement and Community:
Crisis Intervention Team Training

What is a Crisis?

- An emotionally stressful event or traumatic change in a person's life.
- Crisis creates physiological arousal in the form of anxiety which disrupts a person's capacity to think clearly—it hurts too much.
- Is often defined by a person's reaction to an traumatic or unexpected situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds their resources and coping mechanisms.
- Many times crises are recurring situations for an individual with serious mental illness or a substance use disorder.



What is Crisis Intervention?

- An immediate and short term emergency response to mental, emotional, physical, and behavioral distress.
- Crisis interventions help to restore an individual's equilibrium to their pre-crisis functioning and minimize the potential for long term trauma or distress.
- The focus of crisis intervention is:
 - a here and now orientation
 - time limited interactions
 - a view of the individual's behavior as understandable (rather than a pathological) reaction to stress

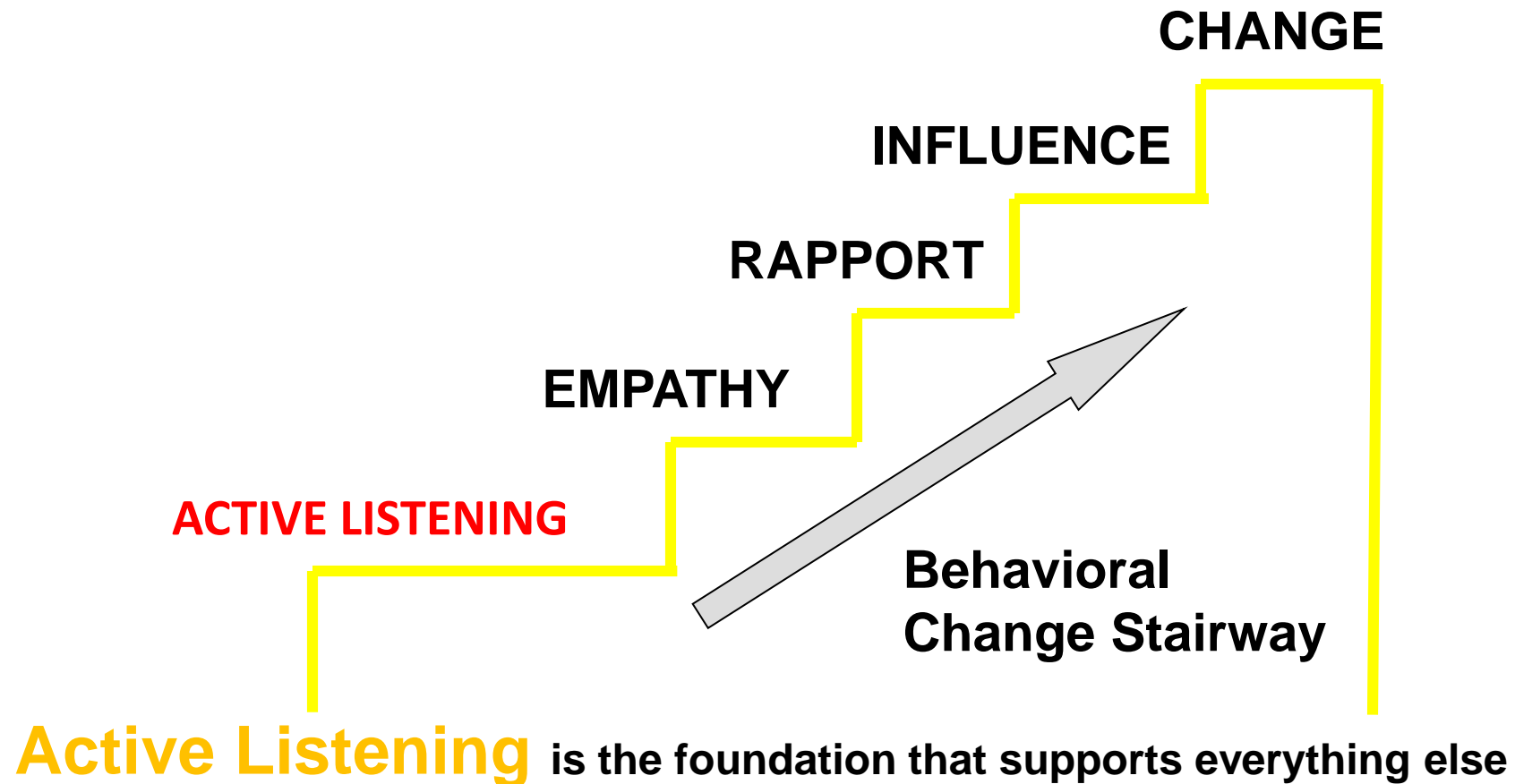


Why Is Managing the Crisis Important?

- Safety for all
- Fewer tragedies
- Better decisions
- Better outcomes
- Reduction with criminal justice involvement



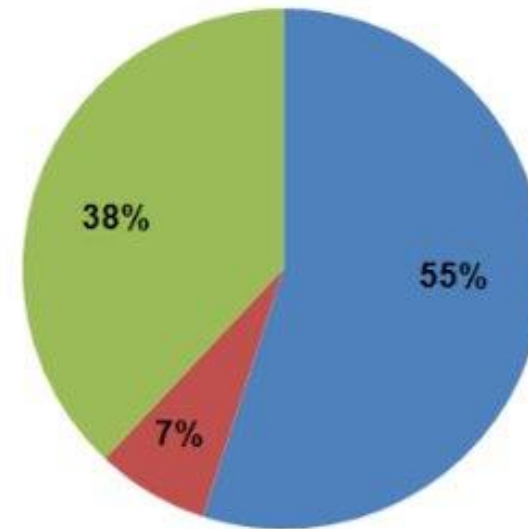
The CIT Officer's Role: Influencing Behavioral Change



Effective Communication Rule

- Three important elements in any face-to-face encounter:

1. **Words Used (7%)**
2. **Tone of Voice (38%)**
3. **Body Language (55%)**



- There must be congruence among all three elements for effective communication

Mehrabian

Source: Albert

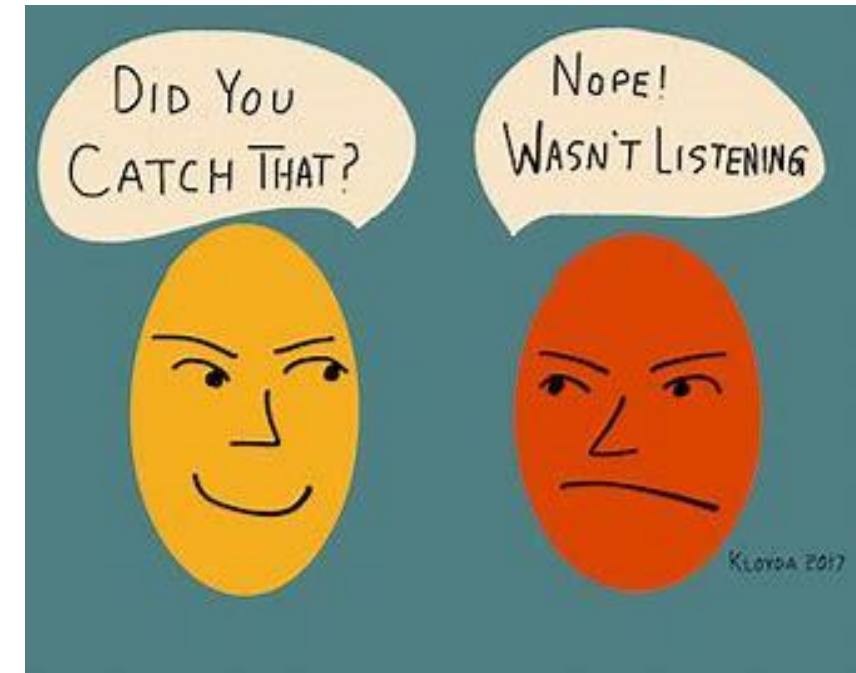
Active Listening Skills

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



Active Listening

- It's a skill that can be developed
- It takes time and patience
- It requires focus on verbal & nonverbal messages
- Is nonjudgmental



What Active Listening is Not

- Advice, Judgment or Persuasion
- Discussion of topics not expressed by the person in crisis

The person's feelings, values, statements
and opinions are what count



Attentive

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



Also, attend to the above in yourself

Restatement

Restating or *Feeding Back* And Clarifying 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:

"So you were fired from your job Or

"You were fired and you sleeping in your car"



Reflection

► The Feelings

Person in Crisis:

“I’m a failure. I had two years without using. I was going to meetings. My wife and I were doing okay. Work was good. I can’t do anything right.”

CIT Officer:

“I can see you are upset about what has happened.”



Summarizing/Paraphrasing



- This is a strategy in which you sort through the information presented in order to pull out and paraphrase the essential ideas.
- It requires you to determine what is important, to condense this information, and to state it in your own words

Summarizing/Paraphrasing



- *"I started drinking again and me and my wife went to fighting. She left me telling me it was my last chance. I didn't go to work today. It was my last chance and they ended up firing me. It's just not worth it anymore."*
- *"My husband keeps playing games with me. He is so manipulative. He is telling everyone it is my fault, that I am a bad mother saying I am unstable. I can't help it if I get depressed at times. Life can be so tough and overwhelming. Now he is trying to keep me from seeing my own kids. I have the court papers that give me custody and he won't send them back. What do I do?"*

Restatement/Reflection/Summary Scenario Practice