Category

Consulting

Trusted Advisor Client Listening & Empathy Skills Playbook

Listening to understand the client's actual experience, not just to extract the facts needed for analysis

- Practitioner
- Intermediate
- Template Included

- Mithun A. Sridharan

- 24 July 2021
- 4 minute(s)

Overview

A framework for building genuine empathetic listening skill — understanding a client's actual experience and underlying concern, not just extracting the facts needed for analysis — as a distinct, practicable skill that deepens trusted advisor relationships beyond technical competence.

How is empathetic listening different from the active listening

signals covered in the Communication & Executive Presence Playbook? That playbook covers verbal signals demonstrating you're listening (acknowledgment, reflection). This one is about the deeper skill of genuinely understanding the client's actual experience and

underlying concern, not just the surface content of what they're saying — empathy as substance, not just communication technique.

Isn't empathy something you either have or don't, rather than a

learnable skill? Genuine empathetic capacity varies, but the specific skill of actively listening for underlying concern and experience, beyond surface content, is learnable and improvable with deliberate practice, which is this playbook's focus.

{ "@context": "https://schema.org", "@type": "FAQPage", "mainEntity": [{ "@type": "Question", "name": "How is empathetic listening different from the active listening", "acceptedAnswer": { "@type": "Answer", "text": "signals covered in the Communication & Executive Presence Playbook?\nThat playbook covers verbal signals demonstrating you're listening\n(acknowledgment, reflection). This one is about the deeper skill of\ngenuinely understanding the client's actual experience and underlying\nconcern, not just the surface content of what they're saying —\nempathy as substance, not just communication technique." } }, { "@type": "Question", "name": "Isn't empathy something you either have or don't, rather than a", "acceptedAnswer": { "@type": "Answer", "text": "learnable skill?\nGenuine empathetic capacity varies, but the specific skill of actively\nlistening for underlying concern and experience, beyond surface\ncontent, is learnable and improvable with deliberate practice, which is\nthis playbook's focus." } }] }

Subscriber access

Unlock this playbook

This playbook — including every framework, template, and step-by-step section — is available free to Think Insights subscribers. Enter your email to unlock it instantly and get our weekly insights newsletter. No account needed, and access is remembered on this device.

First Name

Last Name

Email

Country - Select -

■ I agree to data processing in accordance with GDPR

Submit

Leave this field blank

References

Related playbooks

Consulting

Cross-Functional Trusted Advisor Playbook

A framework for becoming a genuinely trusted advisor across business, technology, and operations stakeholders simultaneously — building real fluency and credibi

- Practitioner
- Advanced
- Template Included

Read playbook

Consulting

Framing Client Problems & Co-Creating Solutions as a Trusted Advisor Playbook

A framework for collaborative problem framing and solution co-creation with clients — genuinely involving them in shaping both the problem definition and the so

- Practitioner
- Intermediate
- Template Included

Read playbook

Consulting

High-Stakes Executive Conversations for Trusted Advisors Playbook

A framework for preparing and navigating the rare, acute high-stakes executive conversations — a crisis update, a difficult recommendation with significant cons

- Practitioner
- Advanced
- Template Included

Read playbook

Talk to us about client listening skills

Tags

- Trusted Advisor
- Empathy
- Listening Skills

Author

Mithun A. Sridharan Thought Leader

I'm Mithun A. Sridharan, Founder of this website - Think Insights - on Strategy, Management Consulting, Leadership, Digital Transformation, and Data Literacy. Follow me on social media or connect with me on LinkedIn for updates.