5 STEPS TO EMPATHIC LISTENING

Empathetic Listening is a technique which can help you manage and avoid disruptive and assaultive behaviors. The foundation of the technique can be summarized in 5 simple steps.

1. Provide the speaker with your undivided attention. This is one time “multi-tasking” or “rapid refocus” will get you in trouble.
2. Be non-judgemental. Don’t minimize or trivialize the speaker’s issue.
3. Read the speaker. Observe the emotions behind the words. Is the speaker angry, afraid, frustrated or resentful. Respond to the emotion as well as the words.
4. Be Quiet. Don’t feel you must have an immediate reply. Often if you allow for some quiet after the speaker has vented, they themselves will break the silence and offer a solution.
5. Assure your understanding. Ask clarifying questions and restate what you perceive the speaker to be saying.

Following these procedural steps will place you in a better situation for addressing the key issue.