



Actively Listen

Floyd's Story

Painters Ed, Tom, and Tina have returned from lunch and are loading as many materials as possible onto the suspended scaffold so they don't have to come back down again until they're done painting for the day. Their foreman Floyd stops by and asks if they've inspected the rigging on the roof to make sure the scaffold is secure. While Ed is telling Floyd that they'd checked it in the morning and were only gone 45 minutes, Floyd gets a text and looks down to see what it says. Floyd looks up from his phone, shrugs, and says one check in the morning is probably okay. Ed tells the crew to hurry and finish loading the materials so they can complete the job on time. Just as they are raising the scaffold, one of the tiebacks comes loose. Luckily no one was hurt but everything slides off the scaffold onto the ground.

- Was Floyd actively listening to what Ed was saying?
- What could Floyd have done differently?
- What are some ways foremen can actively listen when communicating with their crew?

Frontline safety leaders Actively Listen when they...

- Pay close attention to what their crew members are saying.
- Listen to hear what is being said rather than just to come up with a response.
- Pay close attention to non-verbal cues such as body language and eye contact.
- Ask clarifying questions to make sure they understand the message that is being communicated.

Leadership actions we will practice today and every day:

➤ As your frontline supervisor and safety leader, I will:

- Treat you with respect by giving you my full attention when you are talking to me. I will not check emails or take phone calls.
- Listen to hear what you are saying, not listen to come up with a response.
- Ask questions to make sure I understand what you're saying.

➤ Crew members are also safety leaders and are expected to:

- Give me your full attention when we are talking.
- Listen to hear what I am saying, not listen to come up with a response.
- Ask me questions to make sure you understand what I am saying or asking you to do.

Safety leaders have the courage to demonstrate they value safety by working and communicating with all team members to identify and limit hazardous situations even in the presence of other job pressures such as scheduling and costs.

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Scan this QR code to access the Actively Listen refresher video.



Everyone, from the company owner to the foreman to the new employee, should be a safety leader. Effective safety leadership can help prevent jobsite injuries and illnesses.