READY-TO-USE TEMPLATE

Close the Loop After Listening

A listening agenda, a clear response record, and a promised update people can find.

45 minutes | A listening session and follow-through record

Use the supplied wording as it is, or change it together. The Word file and Notion template are editable. Keep only notes you need.

Before the conversation · Make the boundary clear

Explain purpose, choice, confidentiality limits, who sees notes, and what you can influence. Do not promise anonymity you cannot provide.

We want to understand [part of the work]. You can pass, write later, or use [appropriate alternative channel]. We will record themes and agreed actions, not attributed quotations without permission. I can decide [scope] and will seek help with [scope]. We will explain any limits to confidentiality before we begin.

0-20 minutes · Hear what the work is like

Ask for concrete experiences. Avoid defending the system or requesting sensitive details in a group.

What helps you do good work here?
Where do you have to compensate for the way work is arranged?
What happens when someone asks for help or raises a concern?
Whose experience might be different?
What would you most like us to understand before proposing a fix?

Notes and changes for our situation

Close the Loop After Listening

WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

20-30 minutes · Check what you heard

Reflect themes as provisional. Invite corrections and differences rather than forcing a single story.

Here is what I think I heard: [themes]. What have I misunderstood? What is missing? Which differences should remain visible? Is there anything here you do not want included in the shared account?

30-40 minutes · Separate actions from investigation

For each theme, state what you can do, what needs checking, or what cannot change and why. Do not turn every concern into a task for its speaker.

Theme / work affected:
Response: act / investigate / cannot change now:
Reason and evidence:
Owner with authority:
People to involve, with agreement:
Support or resources needed:
Date for action or next update:

Notes and changes for our situation

Close the Loop After Listening

WORKING AGENDA / CONTINUED

40-45 minutes · Agree the update

Check the account before sharing. Use an agreed place and accessible format. A response is still owed when there is no solution yet.

We will share [agreed account] at [place] by [date]. It will include what we heard, what we will do, what remains open, and when we will return. [Owner] will check it for accuracy and unintended identification before sharing.

At the follow-up · Show what changed

Return on the promised date even when progress is incomplete. Ask about the effect, not just whether a task was completed.

You raised [theme]. We did [action] / have not done [action] because [reason]. What changed in your experience? What remains difficult? We will keep / revise / stop [action], with [owner] returning by [date].

The thinking behind it

Listening changes little if the same conditions remain and nobody hears back. Make your response part of the practice: what you heard, what you changed, what you cannot change, and what you are still learning.

Read You Have a Culture Problem by Nic Payne

Keep the useful part

A shared record, not a transcript. Agree what belongs here and what should stay private.

Date / people / purpose

What we agreed

Next step / owner / support / date

What remains open

When we will return to it

What did I invite people to tell me that I have not yet answered?