

LEADERSHIP BITES TAKEAWAY



SERIES 2

SUMMARISING AND PARAPHRASING - SESSION 5

Whet your appetite:

In this session, we discover the differences between paraphrasing and summarising and why both skills are essential to leaders, regardless of role, level or sector. In a time when we are constantly distracted and attention spans are shorter than ever, being able to communicate quickly and briefly while still including all the key points or views you need to, is a skill that can set you apart from the crowd and show to be a good listener, one quick to understand and someone who understands just how busy everyone is.

It can also put you in the position where you are able to bring clarity to a discussion or meeting, allowing others to step back from cyclical conversations where people become frustrated at a lack of progress or decision. We look at the relationship between the two skills, some tips on how to do them well and some pitfalls to avoid.

By the end of this session, you will be able to: -

- Describe the difference between paraphrasing and summarising and aspects of how to do both well.
- Explain how this is relevant to your role
- Identify one step you will take to improve your communication as a leader

The Leadership Model:

Paraphrasing

• is about restating someone's message in your own words while keeping the full meaning intact.

We might recognise this as

- "I hear you, and here's how I understand what you're saying."

Summarising

• is about distilling a message down to its key points.

For example saying,

- "Here's the essence of what we've covered."

These aren't just communication techniques—they're leadership behaviours.

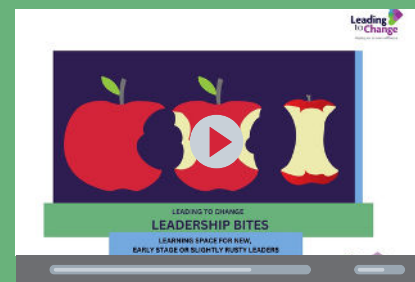
They show we're listening, that we care, and that we're helping others:

- make sense of complexity,
- dispel some ambiguity
- move meetings, conversations or thinking forward.

"The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do."

Thomas Jefferson

Watch the recording:



For reflection:

Using the model as your basis:

- How do summarising and paraphrasing help build trust, clarity, or psychological safety in your team or organisation?
- Can you think of a time when these tools helped—or when their absence caused confusion?
- What's one situation in the coming week where you could intentionally use summarising or paraphrasing to strengthen your leadership?

What next:

- What opportunities can you find to practice these skills in a safe environment?
- Complete the [Leadership SAQ](#) to find areas of strength and development and suggestions on where to build these skills.

Explore More:

Watch: [Attending, Paraphrasing and Summarising](#)

Read: [Summarising, Paraphrasing, and Reflecting](#)

View: [Slides from the session as a pdf.](#)