Coaching Skills

Kathy Obear
Amherst, Massachusetts

1. Paraphrasing / restating the participant's comments

a. Purpose:
   - Helps to clarify your understanding of what you heard
   - Gives participant chance to clear up any misunderstandings
   - Allows you to emphasize the point
   - Conveys that you are actively listening

b. Strategies:
   - Do not "parrot" back the comment word for word
   - Condense the essence of the comment into a short phrase or sentence
   - Make your comment as a statement of fact
   - "So, you believe that..."
   - "You think that..."
   - "I get the impression you ..."

2. Clarifying comments

a. Purpose:
   - To get a clearer definition/explanation of the comment
   - To demonstrate active listening

b. Strategies:
   - "Are you saying that...?"
   - "Could you explain that more?"
• "I don't quite understand your point. Could you repeat it?"
• "Help me understand why you feel that way
• "What do you mean by the word (or your comment)?"
• "How did you come to that opinion / idea?"

3. Probing Questions

a. Purpose:
   • To develop the quality of the answer
   • To get participants to think through their responses
   • To explore the rational reasoning behind comment

b. Strategies:
   • "Can you be more specific?"
   • "Why do you feel that way?"
   • "Can you give me an example?"
   • "Please explain that a little more
   • "What do you think about that?"
   • "How do you feel about that?"
   • "Tell me more about that"

4. Reflecting Feelings

a. Purpose:
   • To "check out" your perceptions
   • To stimulate discussions about feelings / reactions

b. Strategies:
   • "You're looking a little (feeling word)."
   • "You seem ______."
• "Are you feeling _____?"
• "Kinda _____?"
• "Do you feel _____?"
• "It seems by your (nonverbal behavior) that you may be feeling _____."