



SOME BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ESTABLISHING RAPPORT AND A PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP

PARAPHRASING

Three purposes:

1. Communicates that you are listening
2. Conveys understanding
3. Prompts further elaboration

Involves restating in your own words what has been said: TEACHER – “I just feel as though I have taken on too much.” CONSULTANT – “Right now you’re really feeling overwhelmed and down.”

CLARIFICATION

Two purposes:

1. To assist consultant to more thoroughly understand what is meant by a statement.
2. To foster greater specificity (more operational statements) by the consultee that helps the consultant identify behaviors of concern and goal behaviors for later observation.

Involves seeking additional information by expressing your need for clarification or by confirming your tentative understanding: TEACHER – “Yes, Tyrone was really hyper today.” CONSULTANT – “Hyper? I’m not sure I understand what he was doing.” Or, CONSULTANT – “Hyper? Do you mean he was throwing things, yelling, and jumping out of his seat a lot again?”

SUMMARIZING

Purpose:

Clarifies what has been said and clears ground for progress. Use when you are getting overwhelmed or consultee seems to be going in circles.

Involves halting the interaction to summarize in an A-B-C format what you have heard: CONSULTANT – “let me see if I understand things so far. During the beginning of class (A), Tyrone tends to yell and jump more than at other times (B). Your response has been to ignore such behavior or to tell him to settle down (C). Is that right?”

NONVERBAL

Make periodic eye contact. Nod following verbalizations that you agree with and/or understand. Take notes in ABC format so that consultee can see notes. Take notes when you are talking; not when consultee is talking. This focuses attention on ABC notes, and helps you to avoid missing something important the consultee might say.