

# Communication Skills for Coaches

Engaging in reciprocal and on-going feedback is a vital component of a successful peer coaching partnership.

## Effective Feedback:

- Is offered in a timely manner
- Focuses on specific behaviors
- Acknowledges outside factors that may contribute
- Emphasizes actions, solutions or strategies
- Doesn't try to "fix," but helps explore solutions
- Employs "Active Listening" and the appropriate use of questions

## Active Listening:

- Is focused on the speaker
- Is blocking out all competing thoughts
- Uses appropriate body language (leaning forward, nodding)

## Paraphrasing:

- Is restating what was said
- Is used to check for understanding
- Clarifies what was said by summarizing
- Indicates acceptance and encouragement
- Establishes relationships between speakers

## Clarifying Questions:

- Lead to a clear picture or understanding of a topic or idea
- Are factual
- Are answered quickly
- Are used to gather information

## Probing Questions:

- Are thought provoking and encourage deeper thinking
- Usually start with a paraphrase
- Are often open-ended
- "What might happen if?" "What could the next step be?" "What other strategies could be used to...?"