

FACILITATION TIPS

Utilizing facilitation skills can help your conversations flow better and be productive. Key facilitation skills are outlined below.

Open-ended questions: Asking questions in such a way that they can't be answered by yes, no, or a one-word answer. The reflection questions are already phrased as open-ended, but make sure that any other questions you ask are open-ended as well.

Open-ended question: "What are you learning here that's helping you in school?"

Not an open-ended question: "Have you learned anything here that's helping you in school?"

Paraphrasing: Paraphrasing means summing up what the other person says, in your own words. It's a good way to show that you understood what the person is saying, and can also help you make connections to other points. In your conversations, paraphrasing can bring relevance back to the conversation or reiterate the connections students' have made about their learning.

Examples:

"So it sounds like you are learning time management skills here at work and you've used these skills to ensure you are getting your homework and other tasks complete every week."

"Let's go over what we have talked about so far."

Follow-up probes: Follow-up probes are questions you might add to help the student think more deeply. Probes are very helpful if the student doesn't seem to be able to think of an answer to one of the questions.

They can be very simple:

"What's an example of that?"

"How so?"

"Tell me more."

Or more specific:

"Tell me about a way you've improved your time management skills."

"As a part of this position you are developing customer service skills. Tell me how you've improved your customer service skills."



Keep in Mind:

Students and supervisors benefit from reflection before the conversation.

- Sending out the questions before the conversation gives students an opportunity to think about their answers before you meet, leading to deeper and more authentic reflection.
- Reflecting on what students are learning as a result of working for you can help you prompt students about their learning during the conversation.

You are the air traffic controller, not the pilot.

- It can often be difficult to give students the space to reflect on their learning. During these conversations you are providing direction for reflection, but the student is responsible for driving the conversation. Your job isn't to provide the correct answer, but give students the space to reflect and make connections.

Make peace with silence.

- Give students the opportunity to reflect. Don't immediately ask and answer the question.
- It's not unusual for someone to need 15-30 seconds to think of an answer to a question.

Make sure to wrap up the conversation.

- Remind students why you had the conversation and that you will continue to talk about learning in the workplace. Frequent reminders create an environment where learning is a key aspect of the student employment experience.

Don't Forget to Follow Up!

- Did the student share something upcoming they were excited about? To continue this conversation and begin a healthy relationship, you should follow up about this and ask how it is going.
- Did the student share skills or experiences that they wanted to gain from you? Make sure to put the time in to make this happen for them. And once this has occurred, follow up about their experience and if this new implementation met their expectations.

