

# Summary | OARS Coaching Technique

## Open-ended Questions (vs. close-ended)

- An open question is like an **invitation** – an opportunity to ask a question that does not anticipate a specific answer. It provides room to discover more.
- **More Information.** By asking an open question, you may discover more than you were anticipating, as the respondent is able to provide you with something additional you hadn't considered.
- **Autonomy** is an important concept to remember when coaching. This engagement in the conversation should be more motivating, affecting the tone and direction of the outcomes.

## Affirmations (positive- focus on strengths, efforts)

- When you include statements of appreciation and understanding in your conversations, you create more support and build rapport and goodwill.
- Use **compliments or commendations**: "It takes courage to learn something new about yourself!"
- **Acknowledge personal qualities or abilities**: "Two areas that stand out in your work performance are your ability to take different perspectives and your motivation to learn."
- **Recognize effort**: "Great job on identifying an opportunity to increase your emotional regulation."
- **Positive reframing**: "Your intention to listen more is a great goal and sometimes can take quite a bit of practice."

## Reflective Listening (listen carefully; use silence)

- A reflective listening response is an **opportunity to check understanding** of what the other person means and demonstrate that you have been listening.
- Using reflective listening is like **providing a mirror** for the person so that they can hear someone play back what they have communicated.
- Reflective listening **shows that the other person understands** what is being said, or it can be used to clarify what is being said.
- In effective conversations, reflective listening is used **actively to highlight feelings**, to steer the partner towards a greater recognition of their problems & concerns, and to reinforce statements.

## Summarizing (when appropriate; use sparingly)

- Summarizing is an important way of gathering what has already been said and making sure you understood the individual correctly while helping both of you to move on. Summarizing is putting together a group of reflections.
- **Collecting** – for recalling related statements and probing for more information.
- **Linking** – bringing together two related subjects presented within the conversation.
- **Transitioning** – for wrapping up a discussion.

# Peer Coaching Process

**Objective:** To utilize coaching conversation skills to engage in conversation that supports discovery, learning, and helping.

## Roles

**Presenter:** Person sharing leadership challenge, area of development, or reflection

**Peer Coach:** Person asking questions & providing input

## Process

In pairs, take turns sharing:

Round 1: Partner B (Presenter) shares, while Partner A (Coach) uses OARS to ask questions, actively listen, and learn.

Sample starter questions (coach):

What made you most excited about joining the ELA?

What's your biggest reason for wanting to participate in the ELA?

**Round 1:** Partner B shares (presenter), while Partner A uses OARS to actively listen and learn (coach).

- **Post round Debrief:** In pairs, starting with the person who shared:
  - What went well?
  - What was challenging?
  - What was similar or different from other conversations?

**Round 2:** Switch roles and repeat process from with Partner A sharing and Partner B coaching.

