

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- **Nonverbal gestures** reflecting a positive, open, attentive attitude (e.g., positive or neutral facial expression, leaning forward, maintain eye contact, remain relaxed).
- **Active listening** goes beyond just hearing the words being spoken. Involves understanding and interpreting the meaning behind what is said. Acknowledge understanding by nodding head and/or regularly interject statements, such as “Oh, I see. Please continue.” Avoid frequent interruptions.
- **Nonjudgmental reflection statements** focus on the speaker’s feelings, rather than evaluating actions (e.g., “You have really tried to incorporate that strategy. It’s no wonder you are frustrated.”).
- **Providing corrective feedback** that focuses on changing student learning (e.g., “Let’s try teaching the strategy another way to see if we can improve students’ understanding” instead of “Your strategy instruction was not very effective”).
- **Paraphrasing** restates the meaning of the speaker’s words. Do not echo the speaker’s words, but help clarify the essential facts and communicate understanding.
- **Questioning** promotes open communication with the speaker. Questions can help to clarify information and encourage elaboration (e.g., “Can you tell me more about how you scaffold instruction with this group of students?”). Open-ended questions and prompts can also help teachers identify instructional needs (e.g., “What are your concerns about using this procedure with your struggling readers?”).
- **Summarizing** during a conversation that clarifies important conclusions and keeps the conversation from rambling and/or getting off topic.