Visual Transition Planning Tools: Effective Use and How To Put These Tools into Practice

Denise Geiger, Sr Transition Coordinator - Special Education - Leander ISD
Debbie Gauna, 18+ Transition Services, Teacher/Team Leader - Leander ISD

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Thumbs UP on ZOOM If...

- …you've ever collaborated on a student so complex that the ARDc didn't know how to program meaningfully for the student.

- …you've ever had a student who did nothing or didn't come to school so the ARDc didn't know how to service the student or report on progress or lack of progress.

- …you've ever had a student who exhibited inappropriate behaviors and staff didn't understand how to implement IEP.

- …you've ever had a parent who wanted more supports for their child as they get older but they expect their child to go on to 4-year university and full-time job.

- …you've ever had a family who ignored recommendations to connect with agencies and plan for transition and the student is 19 today.

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Our purpose for today…

- Participants will learn a variety of tools that can be used for effective transition planning.

- Participants will learn about considerations for transition in Elementary, Middle School, High School and beyond.

- Participants will learn some effective facilitation strategies.

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Current Fact:

Many IEP's and ARD discussions Do Not include Transition Planning or Effective Assessments
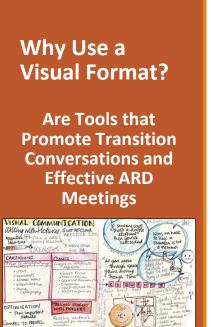
- We see:

  Transition Assessments that are done and no one shares the information

  Transition Assessments will be shared and the data is not leveraged

  The ARD is held with no Transition Assessments were done
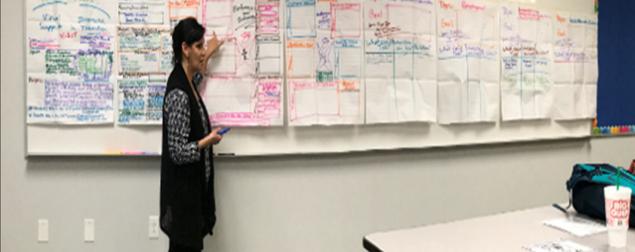
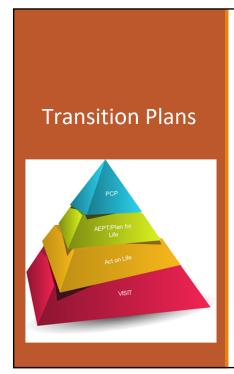 Transition Section driven by the parent's desires and less by the students Post-Secondary Goals

  Student wants to be an NFL player and people consider it impossible for this student to achieve this goal and then say "You can work at the local grocery store"

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Why Use a Visual Format?

Are Tools that Promote Transition Conversations and Effective ARD Meetings

- Participants can see the Beginning, Middle, and End
- Interactive and Collaborative (student, parent, school staff, support persons)
- Student Centered
- Supports Self Determination and Self-Awareness of Independence
- Reality Check for Some Participants
- Goal Setting and Clear Action Plan Developed
- Minimizes chance for miscommunications among meeting participants
- Address concerns and issues which can lessens legal issues
- Used as an informal transition assessment

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The VISIT

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Transition Plans

Which plan is appropriate for your student's needs?

VISUAL TRANSITION TOOLS

A problem-solving process that is utilized to create an effective transition plan in any and/or all areas of transition - Adult Living, Employability, Social, Rec. and Leisure, and Post-Secondary.

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

Person Centered Planning is an ongoing problem-solving process used to help people with disabilities plan for their future. In person centered planning, groups of people focus on an individual and that person's vision of what they would like to do in the future.

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Visual Interaction Support In Transition - VISIT
Adult Employability Profile Tool - AEPT
Adult Centered Tool - ACT on LIFE

- Can be used at elementary, secondary and 18+ services
- Components mirror IEP
- Can be used as an informal transition assessment
- Appropriate at any grade level
- Drives actions in each life domain

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Person Centered Planning - PCP
Plan for Life

- Can be used at elementary but mostly used for secondary and 18+ services
- Provides student ownership
- Can be used as an informal transition assessment
- Appropriate at any grade level
- Drives actions relevant to specific goals
- Support with potential drop out concerns

PCP

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Facilitating Visual Transition Meetings

- Neutral facilitator outside immediate teacher or services providers
- Must have open mind
- Good communication skills
- Good listener
- Ability to ask open ended questions
- Allow for participants to speak and give input
- Time manager
- Knowledge of transition and community resources

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Setting up Meetings

- Need a scheduling system for setting up meetings - SPED Case Manager requests meeting – LISD uses Google form
- Facilitators are assigned by the Admin Assistant
- LISD has assigned a district admin assistant manage requests and keep track of number of meetings
- Facilitators are trained on the different tools - facilitators can be anyone in the district
- Campus SPED Case Managers are the ones who set up the meetings after facilitator assigned
- Date and Time has to be coordinated with all of the participants
- Need process for inviting participants (ie. depends on the tool being used)
- Participants should include: Student,SPED Case Manager, Parent(s), Facilitator
- Suggested other Participants: SLP, LSSP, OT, APE, Gen Ed Teachers, Agencies, Administrators

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Facilitator Preparation for the Meeting

- Data to expect at a meeting to be provided by the SPED Case Manager
  - IEP
  - FIE
  - Previous Transition Meeting notes
  - Transition assessments
- Have Transition Meeting Charts prepared and hung before meeting
- Have access to markers of various colors
- Know how to leverage the data during and after the meeting process
- Keep discussion objective
- Drive confidence in the process

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Transition Assessments

- What Transition Assessments Do You Use?
- LISD uses the following Transition Assessments:
  - Secondary Transition Matrix
  - Self-Advocacy Checklist
  - Student Independence in the Classroom
  - Life Skills Inventory
  - Personality Temperament

Assessment data supports students strengths, preferences, interest, and needs. This information supports the process for guiding the participants with realistic discussion, goals and actions.

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Your Role as a Facilitator

- Ask questions and guide discussion
- Remain neutral - not to make decisions
- Give suggestions and reference resources
- Act as student advocate
- Guide the hard discussions productively
- Facilitate decision making for recommendations to ARD Committee

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Process of Every Visual Transition Meeting

- Explain format of meeting
- Not an ARD meeting
- Good Pre-ARD Tool
- Actions and recommendations can be shared with ARDC
- Brainstorming the whole person
- Student centered with questions directed to student
- Valuable for crucial conversations and problem solving
- Supports buy-in for students and parents
- Generate actions throughout the process

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Meeting Elements

- **Information Gathering**
- **Understanding Disability**
- **Understanding Eligibility Timeline**
- **Discussion of Post Secondary Goals**
- **Understanding of student's Strengths, Preferences, Interests and Needs and Current Skill Levels**
- **Understanding of Current Actions**
- **Discussion of Concerns and Issues for reaching Future Goals**
- **Establishing Goals and Actions**

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Information Gathering

- Student name, age, DOB, disability
- Participants names, facilitator, and those needing copied
- Guardianship status

Have students answer questions to provide this information. This gives a good understanding of student knowledge and parent enabling.

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Understanding Disability

- Personality Temperament
- How does your disability affect your daily life?
- What accommodations and supports do you use?
- Strengths, Preference, Interest, Needs (VISIT)
- Celebrations (AEPT)
- Graduation Option (VISIT)

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Timeline of Eligibility

- Timeline of Eligibility
  - Age/Grade/School Year
  - Start with age on 9/1 of current school year
  - Continue to year when student is 21 on 9/1
  - Discuss transition services eligibility years for students receiving modified content
  - Understand significance of 9/1 date
  - Understand significance of age 21
  - Leverage as a tool to drive urgency on developing independence skills

Age on 9/1	School Year	Grade
9	16/17	4th
10	17/18	5th
11	18/19	6th
12	19/20	7th
13	20/21	8th
14	21/22	9th
15	22/23	10th
16	23/24	11th
17	24/25	12th
18	25/26	18+
19	26/27	18+
20	27/28	18+
21	28/29	18+

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Timeline of Eligibility

George
Age 14
8th grade
Birth date: 7/20

Parents are asking school to hold George back in 8th grade for another year. He was retained in elementary school and repeated the 5th grade.

Age on 9/1	School Year	Grade
15	20/21	8th
16	21/22	9th
17	22/23	10th
18	23/24	11th
19	24/25	12th
20	25/26	18+
21	26/27	18+
22	27/28	18+

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Post-Secondary Goals, Future Dreams

ASK HARD QUESTIONS

- **Address Employment, Living, Transportation, Money Management, Education/Training, Agency**
- Invite student to respond first
- Do not allow others to speak until student is done
- Always honor the student's input
- Can be an emotional conversation for parents

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Present Levels of Achievement
Accommodations for Employment
Concerns & Issues

- Summarize information or details that have already been shared
- Draw a picture of
  - What student is doing
  - What student is not doing
- Good time to review assessment data
  - Secondary Transition Matrix
  - Functional Vocational Evaluation

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Goals and Actions

- Fill out throughout meeting when an idea occurs to you or voiced
- Consider explaining to student why you are writing down an action or idea
- Consider asking student if they are OK with you writing down this action to get buy-in
- Make it "I will…" centered
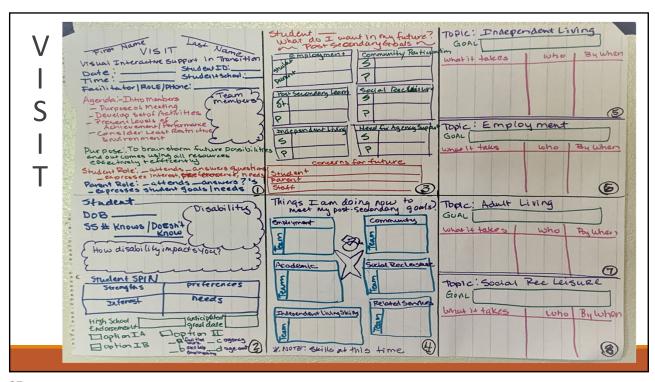- Use word "Consider" to emphasize that a decision is not being made

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Elementary Transition Meetings

- Shorter than secondary meetings
- Components mirror IEP
- Can be used as an informal transition assessment
- Appropriate at any elementary grade level
- Drives actions in each life domain
- Gets parents thinking about middle school dreams
- Gets parents thinking about the future

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Visual
Transition Plans

Selecting the
correct format

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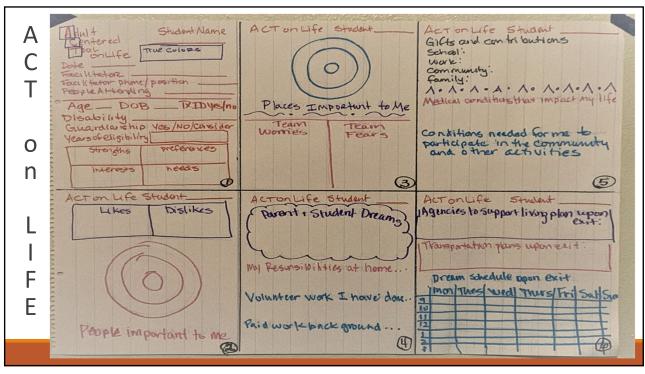# Visual Interactive Support in Transition VISIT

- Identifies strengths, preferences, interests and needs utilizing collaborative teaming to link students and parents to community supports in order to ultimately define an action plan for post-secondary outcomes
- Concerns in all areas: Adult Living, Social Rec Leisure, Employment, Lifelong Learning
- Meeting takes about 3 hours
- Teachers will need to be provided a ½ day sub
- Meeting date based on availability of district facilitators
- Follow up meeting every 3 years

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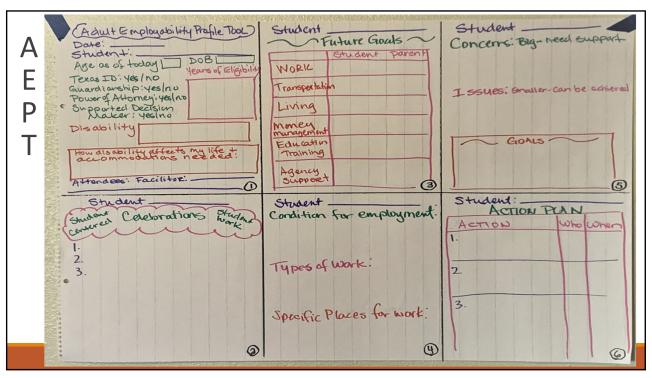27

Adult Centered Tool - ACT on Life

- Identifies strengths, preferences, interests and needs with the goal of linking student and parent to community support and brainstorm employment outcomes. Benefits students in middle school to 18+ services who have more complex transition needs.
- Meeting takes about 3.0 hours
- Teachers will need 1/2 sub
- Date based on availability from district facilitators
- Follow up based on need and program
- Re-visit is usually needed

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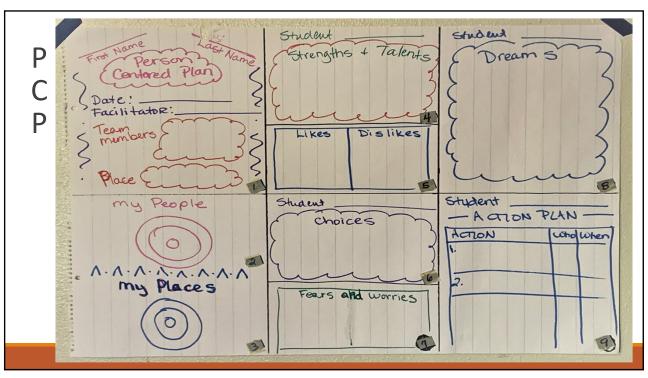# Adult Employability Profile Tool - AEPT

- A visual action plan developed to support student by staff and parents to augment the job development process. The action plan is revisited, and revised if necessary, each year. **Focus on employability! Vocational and 18+ Services**
- Meeting takes about 1.5 hours
- Teachers do not need a sub
- Date based on availability from district facilitators
- Follow up based on need and program

AEPT/Plan for Life

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Person Centered Plan - PCP

- Identifies strengths, preferences, interests and needs in order to build trust and collaboration and to focus on current issues/hurdles in a student's life. Empowers student to take responsibility for his/her choices and to invite participants. Action oriented. On-going process over time.
- Completely student driven, student buy-in is critical
- First meeting is 2 hours and subsequent meetings are around 1 hour
- Done at student house - student invites participants/provides snacks/held after school
- Date based on availability of district facilitators - Facilitators are paid
- Participants are there by choice and are not paid to participate in the meeting
- Follow up meetings at student request

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Plan for LIFE

AEPT/Plan for Life

- A visual action plan developed to support students and staff when there are concerns with attendance or dropping out.
- Held with the facilitator (Drop out specialist, counselor, teacher)
- Meeting takes about 1.5 hours
- Typically just facilitator and student (Student completes forms)
- Parent may be invited and time arranged best time for meeting on campus
- Follow-up meetings based on student interest

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SELF-AWARENESS

Strengths: The attributes that define us as individuals. Overall, personal strengths are the personal skills we use in achieving goals. They are also the skills that help us survive.

Interests: The feeling of wanting to know or learn about something.

Likes/Dislikes: We all have different likes and dislikes, different tastes in food, music, clothes, types of people, and activities.

ACTION PLANNING

Action planning involves "what does it take", "who will support the action", and "when will the action be completed by."

DREAMS

Everyone has hopes and dreams. Dreams are something you would like to have happen in your future.

Most people have no idea how to achieve their dreams. They don't know how to get from here to there. If that describes you, then you'll be glad to know that there really is hope.

Preferences: The power or opportunity of choosing. Liking something, some way, or type of people (i.e. type of environment) more than another.

Needs: Needs such as, but not limited to, food, clothing, shelter, health care, people, leisure activities, important people, and safety.

Choices: Life doesn't just happen. You make choices. Our lives are defined by the choices we make. What choices led to the student's successes and failures?

GOALS

Goals will focus on education, living, and the future.

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One or two immediate goals will be developed to start changing or begin doing right now to increase his/her success and to achieve their future goals. These goals will be broken down into focused actions with a target completion date.

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Systems Needs

- **Resources and Information Awareness**

- **Scheduling System**

- **Preparation and Follow-Up**

- **Transition Assessment for IEP**

- **Transition Discussion for ARD**

- **Roadblocks**

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Resources and Information Awareness

- Graduation plans
- District transition services
- Agency services
- Transition and functional assessments
- Community resources
- Higher education options
- Guardianship/Supported Decision Maker

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Scheduling System

- Each Facilitator asked to commit to facilitate a certain number of meetings per year
- Use a collaborative calendar
- Teachers to use google doc form to request meeting facilitator

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Preparation & Follow-Up

- Order a lot of chart paper, markers and masking tape!
- Designate someone to draw charts (vocational students, instructional assistants)
- Laminate charts and use dry erase markers for reusable charts
- Assign system for having meetings typed
  ○ Have assistant at meeting assigned to type as the meeting is held
  ○ Have assistants type the meeting from charts after the meeting
- Set a 1 week timeline for meetings to be typed
- Set a location on server for the typed meetings to be saved
- Email the typed meeting to participants and those to be copied

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Transition Assessment / ARD

- Use as part of transition skills and post-secondary goals for IEP

- Use for writing transition goal for IEP

- Use for present level of functional skills in PLAAF

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Roadblocks

- Running out of time?
- Getting unstuck
- Unwilling student
- Negative parent
- Staying true to the process
- Environment not productive
- When to recommend Person Centered Planning
- Schedule additional time if needed

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Snapshot of Tools vs Purpose

VISIT	Elementary, Middle school, HIgh school Majority of students with special education services with complex concerns even if they are doing well academically.
ACT on LIFE	More involved disabilities for Secondary and 18+ Transition
AEPT	Vocational and 18+ Transition Services Focuses on employment as a future goal
PCP	Secondary and 18+ Transition Services Student do not have a focus, lack self-determination, and need to focus on small parts to achieve the bigger picture
PLAN for Life	Secondary For students who are at risk to drop out of school

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In Summary

- Start slow
- Try co-facilitating
- Have a conversation with Tracking Teacher before meeting to identify big rocks
- Ask Tracking Teacher for a copy of IEP and FIE if you feel necessary
- Honor the student's voice
- Adapt your communications to accommodate their disability(ies)
- Address crucial conversations with respect
- You are not there to make decisions
- You are there to facilitate the conversation about transition

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Questions

Contact Information

Denise Geiger, LISD Sr Coordinator of Sped Transition

Denise.geiger@leanderisd.org

Debbie Gauna, LISD 18+ Transition Team Lead/Teacher

Debbie.gauna@leanderisd.org

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Communication Skills

The following slides are resources for communication skills facilitators should have:

- Listening Skills
- Leading Questions
- Closed Questions
- Summarizing
- Open-Ended Questions
- Why Questions
- Avoid Red Flag Words
- Miracle Questions
- Scaling Questions

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Good Listening Skills and Attitudes

Skills

➤ Listen for ideas, themes, needs and perceptions of others

➤ Listen to others with focus

➤ Pay attention to details to gain clarity

➤ Listen for what is spoken from the heart (feelings) and the head (thoughts)

➤ Avoid influencing the team by use of 'red' words

➤ Observe and listen to nonverbal behavior as much as you listen to words

Attitudes

➤ Keep an open, curious mind

➤ View listening as an opportunity to gather new information

➤ Be aware of own biases and filters as a listener

➤ Open to listening "between the lines"

➤ View listening as an active process

➤ Recognize that others may refine their thinking as they speak to an attentive listener

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Ways to Improve Your Listening Skills

➢ Listen to yourself and words/expressions you use routinely

➢ Listen to others to fully understand

➢ List words you hear which are judgmental or condescending

➢ List "red flag" words and decide if their use impacted the discussion

➢ Listen for biases, stereotypes and assumptions in meetings and on TV

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Leading Questions

➢ Answer is embedded in the question

➢ Implies what response should be

➢ Tells the listener what the questioner wants to hear

➢ Leads the responder to a specific answer

➢ Are "contaminated" because they might influence the thinking of the other person or the team

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Closed Questions

➢Invite a short answer

➢Examples are "yes/no" or "true/false"

➢Directive in nature and generate a brief response

➢Often begin with
  ➢Can you…?
  ➢Will you…?
  ➢When…?
  ➢Do you…?

➢Save time and direct the conversation

➢Sometimes discourages discussion

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Summarizing

➢Confirms understanding of what has been said

➢Encapsulates a lengthy response from attendee
  ➢"Stop me if I'm wrong…but what I think I'm hearing…"
  ➢"As I step back from these charts, here's what I'm seeing…"
  ➢Allows facilitator to draw cause and effect conclusions

➢Gets everybody on the same page

➢Makes notetaking more manageable

➢Reframe negative interactions; refocuses the discussion

➢Provides a transition to the next agenda item

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Summarizing

➢Three techniques
  ➢Reflecting – using the speaker's same words
  ➢Paraphrasing – Using similar or different words without changing the concept
  ➢Reframing using neutral language – repeat the speaker's message by using different words to alter the perception and/or meaning
    ➢ Change 'angry' to 'upset' or 'concerned'
    ➢ Change 'attitude' to 'feeling' or 'your opinion'

➢Sentence starters
  ➢I sense you are concerned about…
  ➢I can hear you are committed to…
  ➢If I'm hearing you correctly, you have a vision about…

➢Helps to de-escalate strong emotions

TAKEN FROM THE BASICS: FACILITATING ARDS/IEP MEETINGS, REGION XIII

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Open-Ended Questions

➢Stimulate thinking

➢Encourage dialogue

➢Allow for different responses and draw out ideas or feelings

➢Invite elaboration

➢Give more information using the subject's own knowledge and/or feelings

➢Can be a statement which implicitly asks for a response about facts and feelings

TAKEN FROM THE BASICS: FACILITATING ARDS/IEP MEETINGS, REGION XIII

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Why Questions

➢ Seek motivation or reasons behind some action or thought

➢ Invite others to defend their actions

➢ Can have a tone of interrogation

➢ Frequently cut off communication when a question sounds judgmental or condescending

➢ Can be rephrased using 'what' or 'how'

➢ Think carefully before asking why questions

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Avoid Red Flag Words

➢ Emotionally-charged words

➢ May evoke strong feelings

➢ Create barriers to listening, less motivation to communicate

➢ Examples
  ➢ "You never/always…"
  ➢ "You should…"
  ➢ "Why did you…"

➢ Can act as triggers for personal filters

➢ Can put people on the defensive

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Miracle Question

➢May have limited use

➢Can open a discussion when the group seems stuck

➢Shift focus from negative past concerns to future possibilities

➢Examples:
  ➢Suppose one night there's a miracle while you're sleeping and the problem is solved…?
  ➢If it were a perfect world, what would…?
  ➢If the problem were totally resolved, what would…?
  ➢Imagine that a year has passed, what would…?
  ➢If things go perfectly for your child, what will be happening in five years? One year?
  ➢Look at the timeline, when would you like your child to start…?

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Scaling Questions

➢May have limited use

➢Invites a person to take something vague and make it measureable or specific

➢Enables people to identify things that need to improve

➢Allows a person to move away from either/or and see things in a broader way

➢Examples:
  ➢On a scale of 1 to 10…where would you rate yourself right now? What would you need to happen for you to move up?
  ➢On a scale of 1 to 5, how serious would you say this problem is?
  ➢On a scale of 1 to 10, what number represents your classroom when Billy is there?

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