

T.O.O.L.S. for Work Supplement 7

Taking Notes

Materials: None

Prerequisite: Completion of Sessions 1-3

Lesson duration: 30 minutes

I. Why take notes?

A. Ask if anyone is already a note taker, and if so, ask about the types of things they write down. List them on the board. Ask participants if there are other things they would add to the list.

B. Ask why and where it might be important to take notes or write things down. Write answers on the board. If not generated by participants, include:

- in class
- at work
- during discussions with a child's teacher
- during discussions with a doctor
- entering appointments on a calendar
- helps keep you organized
- helps keep you focused

II. Write it down

A. Style

1. If anyone has tried taking notes before, ask them how it works for them. Ask them how they do it.

2. Point out that any style that works for you is ok, as long as it is fast. Possibilities:

- shorthand or your own abbreviations
- printing or writing or half and half
- using pictures or diagrams

3. Point out that using one's best learning style can be helpful. For example, those who learn best by seeing might benefit from drawing pictures or diagrams. Those who learn by doing might find that the *act* of writing is "doing" enough. Those who learn best by listening may not need to write much down past a few key points.

- Encourage trying different approaches and practicing.

B. Focus

1. Point out that the object is it to remember the main idea. A notetaker who tries to write everything down will spend so much time writing, they won't be able to pay enough attention to hear what the speaker is saying.

2. Ask, "*So far, what have been the main points I have made in this discussion?*" Write the answers on the board. These should include:

- why notetaking is important
- any style is ok
- just write down the main point

C. Keep track

1. Explain that notes can't help if they are unusable. Offer these pointers:

• Write the subject and date on your notes. Ask participants why they think this might be helpful.

• Review and clean up your notes as soon as possible. Ask participants why they think this might be helpful.

2. Put your notes where you can find them later. Ask participants why this is important.
Ask where they might put:

- notes from a class like this
- notes from a discussion with a child's teacher
- notes taken during a visit with the doctor

III. Try it out

- A. Ask what questions the participants have.
- B. Ask what three things each one might start doing to become better notetakers, listing answers on the board.
- C. Remind participants to think about their best learning style. Suggest that during Session 4 Set a Goal they try or practice notetaking.