



Ideas for Supporting Athletes in Leadership Roles

- Respect the athlete and their right to make their own decisions, to speak for themselves, to disagree, to do things on their own and in his/her own way, etc.
- Treat the athlete like an adult and equal to everyone else.
- Remember confidentiality! Be aware that you are in a position where you will get a lot of information, which should stay confidential. This includes personal information and issues discussed in the group
- Be on time for meetings and don't forget necessary materials and equipment so the athlete has a fair chance of participating in meetings.
- Accept your role as supporter of the athlete; you are there to allow and enable their voice to be heard, not your own even if you disagree with their views and opinions.
- If you are uncomfortable doing something as a support person, discuss it with your chairperson.
- Be open and willing to learn from each other.
- There may be times when you need to advocate for the athlete's rights. Talk about this possibility with them, and decide when it would be appropriate and necessary for you to step in.
- Be aware that the athlete might like to be involved with others at break-time.
- Listen to the athlete and what they have to say.
- Don't try to guess what the athlete is going to say, finish their sentences, or cut them off.
- Be patient with the athlete and give them a chance to explain things, even if it takes time.
- Use easy-to-understand language.
- If there are changes in your work schedule, tell the athlete as soon as possible so they can arrange for a backup person. Don't forget: To be a support person takes commitment.
- Give notice as early as possible if you want or have to terminate your commitment/ job as a support person. This gives the athlete a chance to find and train a new support person.
- Meet with the athlete on a regular basis and talk about how things are going.
- Have fun working together!