Guide to Interviewing

Based on the Calgary Cambridge Guide

# Initiating the Session

### Establishing initial rapport

1. **Greets** and welcomes the client. The worker begins to develop rapport and a safe environment through informal and brief conversation.
2. **Introduces** self and provides an overview of the commencing process. The worker ensures that the client understands the limits to confidentiality and the peripheral legalities. The worker includes the client in this process by eliciting feedback and developing an understanding of the client understanding of the process.
3. **Demonstrates respect** for the needs and desires of the client. The worker allows the client to direct the orientation of the conversation. (What is it that brought you here today?) (What is it that you would like to achieve with our time together) (Where would you like to begin)

### Identify the reason(s) for meeting

1. **Identifies** the client’s concerns or the issues that the client wishes to address
2. **Listens** attentively to the client’s opening statement without interrupting or directing client’s response
3. **Reflects** client’s concerns and asks for clarification or more information
4. **Collaborates** a desired outcome from the client’s perspective

# Gathering Information

### Exploration of client’s concerns

1. **Encourages the client to tell the story** of the concern(s) from when it first started to the present in their own words
2. **Uses open questioning**
3. **Listens** attentively, allowing client to complete statements without interrupting and leaving space for client to think before answering or go after pausing
4. **Facilitates** client responses verbally and non-verbally e.g. use of encouragement, silence, repetition, paraphrasing, interpretation
5. **Picks up** verbal and non-verbal cues (body-language, speech, facial expression, affect); **checks out and acknowledges** as appropriate
6. **Clarifies** the client’s statements that are unclear or need amplification (e.g. “Could you explain what you mean by feeling depressed?)
7. **Periodically summarizes** to verify own understanding of what the client has said; invites client to correct interpretation or provide further information
8. **Uses concise, easily understood questions and comments**, avoids or adequately explains jargon
9. **Establishes dates and sequence of events**

### Additional skills for understanding the client’s perspective

1. Actively determines and appropriately explores
   1. Client’s **ideas** (i.e. beliefs regarding cause of concern)
   2. Client’s **interests** (i.e. worries) regarding their concern
   3. Client’s **expectations** (i.e. goals and help expected regarding the concern)
   4. Effects on client: how each concern **affects** the client’s life
2. **Encourages client to express feelings**

# Providing Structure to the Meeting

### Making organization overt

1. **Summarizes at the end of a specific line of inquiry** to confirm understanding and ensure no important data was missed; invites client to correct understanding
2. **Progresses** from one section to another **using signposting, transitional statements**; includes rationale for next section

### Attending to flow

1. **Structures** interview in **logical sequence**
2. **Attends to timing** and keeping interview on task

# Building Relationship – Facilitating Client Involvement

### Using appropriate non-verbal behaviour

1. **Demonstrates appropriate non-verbal behaviour**
   1. Eye contact, facial expressions
   2. Posture, position, gestures and other movement
   3. Vocal cues, e.g. rate, volume, tone, pitch
2. **If reads, writes notes** or uses computer, does **in a manner that does not interfere with dialogue or rapport**
3. **Demonstrates** appropriate **confidence**

### Developing rapport

1. **Accepts legitimacy of client’s views** and feelings; is not judgemental
2. **Uses empathy** to communicate understanding and appreciation of client’s feelings or situation; overtly **acknowledges client’s views** and feelings
3. **Provides support**: expresses concern, understanding, willingness to help; acknowledges coping efforts and appropriate self-care; offers partnership
4. **Deals sensitively** with embarrassing or disturbing topics

### Involving the client

1. **Shares thinking** with client to encourage client’s involvement (e.g. “What I am thinking now is…”)
2. **Explains rationale** for questions that could appear to be non-sequiturs

# Closing the session

1. **Gives explanation at appropriate times** (avoids giving advice, information, opinions prematurely)
2. **Gives information in clear, well-organized fashion** without overloading client, avoids or explains jargon
3. **Contracts with the client regarding next steps** for client and worker
4. **Checks client’s understanding and acceptance** of explanation and plans; ensures that concerns have been addressed
5. **Summarizes session** briefly
6. **Encourages client to discuss any additional points** and provides opportunity to do so (e.g. “Are there any questions you’d like to ask or anything you’d like to discuss further?”)

# References

Kurtz, S.M., Silverman, J.D., & Draper, J. (1998). Teaching and Learning Communication Skills in

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Press: Oxford.