

Communication Skills

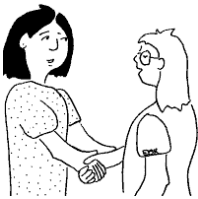
Making a connection with the person you are interviewing

Be open and friendly

Introduce yourself; say who you are and what the discussion is about. Ask what the service user likes to be called e.g. last name with title (Mr/Mrs etc), first name or shortened name Mr House, Michael or Mike

Explain that at any time the service user wants to stop, they can let you know and that's Ok

Introducing the Interview



- Introduce yourself
- Be appropriate in manner
- Explain the aim of the interview

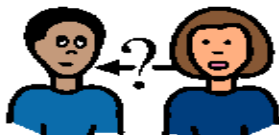
Being in Control of the Interview



- Stay in charge of the interview. If you feel they have not answered the question you asked, ask the person you are interviewing the question again.. Make sure the questions have been answered

- At the end, summarise what you feel the client's key issues from the interview are and repeat these to let them know you understand what they are saying and giving them a chance to correct any misunderstandings. Get them to confirm this is correct.
- Manage the time – this helps you and them

Gathering Information



- You should gather information by using open, closed and probing questions. The trainer will explain what these different types of questions are.

- Follow up the question with more information if you need to

and Supplying Information



- Make sure the information you give is appropriate and accurate

- Be aware of the questions and queries that clients are likely to ask you

Closing the Interview

- Make sure that the service user is left a good impression of your conversation and will feel that they have been dealt with fairly
- Be clear about the next steps and what will happen to the information shared

Listening Skills

It is not easy to become a good listener, and it is hard work. But if you make the effort there are lots of benefits. The benefits for the good listener are:

- A better understanding of what the speaker is saying
- Better relationships - because you understand more accurately and people will appreciate your attention and interest.
- Being better at solving problems

Active Listening Skills – Some Pointers

Encouraging	'Tell me some more....' 'You were saying earlier....' 'Could you explain a little more?'
Acknowledging	'I see' 'OK' 'That sounds really important to you' <i>Non verbal:</i> nodding, eye contact, and open body language?'
Checking	'You seem to be very angry about.....' 'Am I right in thinking you said...?'
Clarification	'I'm not sure I understand. Did you say...?'
Affirmation	'Thank you both for coming" 'You have given us a lot of useful information, which we appreciate'
Empathy	'We can understand why you are worried by this' 'We can see why this situation has been confusing for you and why you are getting impatient'
Asking a variety of questions	'Could you tell me more about that please?' 'Could you describe exactly what the problem is?' 'Have you discussed this with anyone else?' 'Is there anything else you feel could be done to reduce your rent arrears? '
Reflecting Summarising	'You are clearly upset. What particularly upsets you?' 'If I understand problem correctly you are not happy with---- and you would like us to----? Is this correct? ' Or 'If I understand the problem correctly you want to and need our help with this'

Asking the right questions

- You must ask questions carefully- take your time.
- You need to think about why you are asking a question - what's the purpose of it.
- What will you do with the answer - do you need it? Remember privacy/dignity and remember Data Protection/GDPR rules (don't collect things you don't need).
- There are a number of different types of questions that obtain different types of responses.

Open Questions

Open questions encourage discussion.

It is better to ask open 'what/how/why' questions, rather than 'closed' yes/no questions, unless you require specific confirmation about a point.

Open questions tend to put people at ease, they show you are interested and it gives them an opportunity to explain things in their words. Open questions get good opinions, attitudes and feelings and encourage people to talk. They allow you to find out information without interrogating.

EXAMPLE OPEN QUESTIONS

How would you describe your support needs?/Can you describe your support needs?

Can you describe your housing needs?

What do you think about the new Gateway system?

Closed Questions

Closed questions are not always bad. Sometimes you need to use closed questions to help you to check understanding.

Closed questions limit answers – all you are likely to get is yes, no, don't know or a specific piece of information. They actually discourage people from talking

If you use a closed question, you can follow it up with a probing question to dig deeper and get more information.

EXAMPLE CLOSED QUESTIONS

What is your name/?

How long have you lived there?

Probing Questions or Extending Questions

Probing questions are

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.....

EXAMPLE PROBING QUESTION

Can you tell me more about the way your rent arrears developed?

Reflective Questions

Reflective questions are

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EXAMPLE REFLECTIVE QUESTION

What was that like from your point of view?

Hypothetical Questions

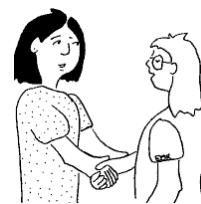
Hypothetical questions are

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EXAMPLE HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION

If you were able to design/describe a service that meets your needs, what would the service be like?

Remember! A “Good” Communicator.....



- Listens
- Is sensitive to feelings
- Is able to avoid rushing the interview/ session but stay within the times set
- Is able to ask further questions to find out more information
- Is able to check what has been said and give constructive feedback
- Treats people fairly but respects that people have different needs

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