



Motivational Interviewing 1 Skills

- **Welcoming Statement** = A statement of welcome to a parent.
 - Why it is important: The goal of a welcoming statement is to help the parent feel at ease and valued. A welcoming statement can help the parent feel connected to you and begin to form a partnership. Consider this to be a form of good customer service. In a greeting, you might also begin to develop focus or an agenda for the time you will spend with the parent.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “Hello and welcome to DWS. Thank you for coming in today. Let’s take a few minutes to understand what brought you here and gather information to see how we can help you.”
- **Orienting Statement & Permission Question** = Language designed to plan and organize your time with the customer with a permission question to seek customer’s buy-in.
 - Why it is important: Orienting statements are important because they help both parents and Employment Counselors develop a plan for how the time will be spent. Orienting statements are like developing a “road map,” and such maps can help reduce parents’ anxiety, promote good use of time, and allow parents to add or subtract topics to be discussed. Further, orienting statements communicate the importance of meeting by suggesting there is business that needs to be covered.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “Would it be ok if we talked more about what DWS can do for you and create a plan that would most benefit you and your family?”
- **Listening & Reflecting** = A method to clarify the Employment Counselor accurately understands the parent, to validate a parent, to let the parent feel they have been heard, and to help the parent continue with a dialogue thread.
 - Why it is important: Reflections can support the working alliance between the Employment Counselor and parent because the parent feels heard and understood. The adage, “I don’t care how much you know until I know how much you care” aptly depicts the power of reflections.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “If I am understanding correctly, you really find it important to work full time to provide for your family. Is that right?”
- **Empathy** = Parents often have life difficulties that drive their resistance. This skill strives to promote a sense of forward momentum through discussing what she might do to succeed.
 - Why it is important. Empathically hearing the parent will help you have more empathy towards the parent. Showing empathy also helps the parent feel validated and heard. Sometimes, all that is needed for a parent to move forward is to know someone else also knows of the difficulty.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “That must be really difficult to still be looking for a childcare provider after visiting a few already.”

- **Normalizing** = The effort to reassure the parent that the difficulties they are experiencing are not uncommon.
 - Why it is important: Using Normalizing statements helps the parent feel reassured. Normalizing also promotes a sense of acceptance and thwarts a sense of shame. Plus, by demonstrating difficulties are not uncommon would open up dialogue for potential solutions.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “You are right. Finding a job in this economy is hard. Still, your situation is not uncommon. How about we work together and talk through steps we can take to better prepare you in your job search?”
- **Appropriate Disclosure** (subskill of normalizing) = Sharing a minimally distracting and non-intrusive personal experience with a customer, relevant to the conversation and **intended to help the customer**. Use this skill cautiously so as to keep the focus on the customer. ***Use sparingly and as a secondary method to normalizing.**
 - Why it is important: Appropriate self-disclosure can increase trust and rapport in a helping relationship. The customer may feel less alone, and more connected to you as a result. A happy medium of disclosure will continue a partnership, where a disclosure that is too intense may have adverse impacts on the relationship.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “When my son started kindergarten, I also struggled with letting him go.”
- **Open-ended Questions** = A question that should reasonably draw a considerable amount of information from the customer rather than a relatively brief response (e.g., 3 or 4 word answer).
 - Why it is important: Both open- and close-ended questions have a role. Open-ended questions are good for drawing out considerable amounts of information from the parent. Further, in many situations we want the parent to do more of the talking so they become more engaged and take ownership for their progress. It certainly is impossible to naturally engage parents with only open-ended questions, yet the ratio is important. Parents who are subjected to high levels of close-ended questions may feel interrogated and attacked.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “What would be the benefits of you continuing on your treatment plan? How would that positively affect your family?”
- **Affirmations** = Offering sincere compliments or praise to the customer. We can direct compliments at many aspects of a customer’s life, such as an *achievement* (e.g., finishing a class, getting a job), *effort* to reinforce a customer’s engagement in a productive process, *insight* customers have that will help them to succeed, and, among others, *personality* or *characteristics* customers possess that will help them to succeed.
 - Affirmations serve many purposes, including reinforcing parents’ behaviors connected to success, building confidence, strengthening the working alliance, and encouraging parents to persevere with difficult tasks.
 - How an EC might use this skill: “You did a great job on completing your job logs this week! I am really impressed how motivated you are in your job search.”

Keep in mind, it's not about using the words "What", "Why", and "How" in a sentence. You can use "what" questions for all lands and "How" questions for all lands.

- What Land is "Focus"
- Why Land is "Motivation"
- How Land is "Steps, Actions, Plan"

Examples:

- WHAT LAND: What are you going to do this evening? Go to a Utes Game
- WHY LAND: What would be your reason for going to the Utes Game? I get to be with my friends
- HOW LAND: What are the steps you will take to get to the Utes Game? Take Trax
- WHAT LAND: How would you describe your ideal employment situation?
- WHY LAND: How would you and your family benefit your ideal employment situation?
- HOW LAND: How would you go about attaining your ideal employment situation?