ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY:
SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR GATHERING
INFORMATION

INTERVIEWING WORKSHOP

TRAINING SUMMARY

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ACTION FOR CHILD PROTECTION

ACTION is a private non-profit organization dedicated to the systematic advancement of safety intervention case practice and decision making in public child protective service agencies. ACTION’s consultation, technical assistance and training emphasizes and supports the creation of effective and accountable safety intervention systems; competent CPS staff; expert supervisors; useful practice and decision making methods and relevant training that result in children being protected and caregivers restored to their protective role and responsibilities.

ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY: SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR GATHERING INFORMATION – INTERVIEWING WORKSHOP

This training is concerned with the most essential competency required in CPS intervention – interviewing to collect information. It’s significance is underpinned by the fact that among all that CPS workers do interviewing is the single responsibility which must be performed totally independent of others. Regardless of a professional’s education, experience or personal confidence, professional competency in interviewing or gathering information requires continual learning, practice and application. That’s what this training is about. There is no point where an individual no longer needs to grow in developing the quality of their performance. The general objective of this training is to promote effective interviewing and to recognize interviewing as the most challenging responsibility in CPS. Like anything in life, in order to excel, one must continually practice. Practice better prepares the interviewer to achieve better results. That is the theme supporting this training.
ACTION FOR CHILD PROTECTION

ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY: SKILLS AND
TECHNIQUES FOR GATHERING INFORMATION

INTERVIEWING WORKSHOP

Agenda

DAY 1

9:30    Session 1  Workshop Preliminaries
11:00   Session 2  Deliberate Information Gathering
11:30   Session 3  Observing, Listening and Questioning
3:30    Adjourn

DAY 2

9:30    Session 4  Focusing and Conversational Looping
1:00    Session 5  Interviewing Challenging Clients
3:30    Adjourn

DAY 3

9:30    Session 5  Continues
1:30    Session 6  ...And in Summary
3:00    Adjourn
SESSION 1
WORKSHOP PRELIMINARIES

Estimated Time  Day 1  9:30 – 10:45 (75 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce the training.
- To review workshop themes and objectives.
- To promote professional learning, critical thinking and group interaction.
- To have participants reflect on their current practice and identify a baseline for their level of competency.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Introductions: Trainer and Trainees (15 minutes)
2. Presentation: Workshop Set-Up (15 minutes)
3. Exercise: Looking Glass Self (45 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide  Enhancing Professional Competency: Skills and Techniques for Gathering Information during an CPS Investigation
- Slide  Introductions
- Slide  Workshop Set-Up
- Slide  Definition of Competency
- Slide  Personal Investment and Self-Imposed Expectations
- Slide  Evaluating Your Professional Competence as an Interviewer
- Slide  Workshop Objectives
- Slide  Workshop Agenda
- Handout  Workshop Agenda
- Slide  Exercise: Looking Glass Self: Identifying Your Natural Style
- Slide  Natural Style
- Slide  Handout: Looking Glass Self: Identifying Your Natural Style
- Handout  Looking Glass Self: Identifying Your Natural Style
The session introduces the training and establishes a theme consistent with notion that regardless of a worker’s education, experience or personal confidence, professional competency in interviewing or gathering information requires continual learning, practice and application. This session emphasizes that there is no point where an individual no longer needs to grow in developing the quality of their performance. Effective interviewing is posed as the most challenging responsibility in CPS. In this session as the training begins participants are encouraged to be introspective about their abilities, style and approach to interviewing. The session completes introductions of participants; reviews the agenda; and covers all training logistics.
SESSION 2
DELIBERATE INFORMATION GATHERING

Estimated Time Day 1  11:00 – 11:30  (30 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To reinforce the idea that effective interviewing requires the purposeful use of techniques and methods.
- To review specific interviewing rules and core interpersonal techniques and consider their application.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Presentation: Deliberate Information Gathering (30 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide  Session 2: Deliberate Information Gathering
- Slide  Session 2: Objectives
- Slide  Antony Jay Quote
- Slide  Creative Interviewing
- Slide  Definition of Deliberate Information Gathering
- Slide  Handout: Rules of Deliberate Information Gathering During Investigation
- Handout  Rules for Deliberate Information Gathering During the Investigation
- Slide  Keep it Conversational
- Slide  Be Comprehensive
- Slide  Listen
- Slide  Get Investment
- Slide  Neutral and Objective
- Slide  Premature Solutions
- Slide  Handout: Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering
- Handout  Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

This session launches training by providing context and guidance about the nature, style and responsibility for information collection and therefore for interviewing. The concept of Deliberate Information Gathering (DIG) is considered with obvious implications for diligence and perseverance in information collection. The challenge of keeping information collection and interviewing conversational is addressed and emphasized. This session is mostly didactic and discussion based. The objective is to establish in participants’ minds the essential approach and essential interview techniques they must be responsible for operationalizing.
SESSION 3
OBSERVING, LISTENING AND QUESTIONING

Estimated Time Day 1 11:30 – 3:30 (160 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To review what one must know to effectively demonstrate the following interviewing skills: observing client behavior, listening to client verbal responses and cues, open-ended questions and closed-ended questions.
- To practice these essential interviewing skills.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Demonstration: Observing Client Behavior (55 minutes)
2. Presentation: Intentional Listening (15 minutes)
3. Exercise: Applying Effective Listening Responses (45 minutes)
4. Exercise: Practicing the Use of Open-Ended Questions (45 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide Session 3: Observing, Listening and Questioning
- Slide Session 3 Objectives
- Slide Video Demonstration: Verbal – Non Visual Observation
- Video Verbal – Non Visual Observation
- Slide Video Demonstration: Verbal – Visual Observation
- Video Verbal – Visual Observation
- Slide Observing Non-Verbal Behavior/Cues
- Slide Video Demonstration: Visual Observation
- Video Visual Observation
- Slide Intentional Listening
- Slide Listening results in...
- Slide Barriers to Intentional Listening
- Handout Barriers to Intentional Listening
- Slide Encouraging and Paraphrasing: Primary Purposes
- Slide Handout: Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering
- Handout Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering (from session two)
- Slide Video Demonstration: Encouraging and Paraphrasing – Part 1
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

In this session the work begins. The bulk of the session is devoted to participant experimenting and practicing. Three areas are covered: observing; effective listening responses; and using open ended questions. Reinforcement continues with respect to Deliberate Information Gathering and other ideas that have preceded this session as the training pursues a building block strategy for learning and skill development.
SESSION 4
FOCUSBING AND CONVERSATIONAL LOOPING

Estimated Time      Day 2  9:30 – 12:00 (165 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To emphasize the importance of conducting “guided” conversations when interviewing in order to elicit detailed case information.
- To consider essential skills and techniques associated with focusing client attention during an interview and conversational looping (seeking detail).
- To apply and practice the skills and techniques for gathering information.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Presentation: Challenges in Interviewing (25 minutes)
2. Presentation: Focusing Client Attention (15 minutes)
3. Presentation: Conversational Looping (15 minutes)
4. Video: Observing Focusing and Conversational Looping (45 minutes)
5. Exercise: Practicing Focusing and Conversational Looping (60 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide  Session 4: Focusing and Conversational Looping
- Slide  Session 4 Objectives
- Slide  Challenges in Interviewing
- Slide  Conducting Conversations
- Slide  Handout: Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering
- Handout  Core Techniques for Deliberate Information Gathering (from session two)
- Slide  Focusing: Primary Purposes
- Slide  Handout: Focusing Clients: Selective Attention to Client Feedback
- Handout  Focusing Clients: Selective Attention to Client Feedback
- Slide  Definition for Conversational Looping
- Slide  Handout: Topical Conversational Looping
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

This session introduces topical conversational looping which provides participants with a skillful process to information collection that moves from gathering less personal information to deeper and more critical information. Participants observe demonstrations seeking substantive information on parenting practices. Finally, participants test their abilities through exercises using conversational looping to understand and collect information about adult functioning. Routinely, instruction, discussion, and debriefing of exercise emphasizes conscious use of techniques that have been covered in previous sessions.
SESSION 5
INTERVIEWING CHALLENGING CLIENTS

Estimated Time Day 2 1:00 – 3:30 & Day 3 9:30 – 1:30 (320 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To emphasize that resistance is what makes clients challenging.
- To clarify that resistance is a natural/to be expected phenomenon.
- To review the four types of challenging or resistant clients.
- To emphasize the interviewing techniques that are most effective with challenging clients.
- To practice applying techniques that reduce client resistance and increase information collection.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Demonstration: Responding to Resistance (25 minutes)
2. Presentation: Interviewing Challenging Clients (30 minutes)
3. Presentation/Exercise: Responding to Challenging Clients (100 minutes)
4. Exercise Practicing Reflective Listening Statements (30 minutes)
5. Exercise Application with a Challenging Client (135 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide Session 5: Interviewing Challenging Clients
- Slide Session 5 Objectives
- Slide Video Demonstration: Resistance and Non Resistance Demonstrated
- Video Resistance and Non Resistance Demonstrated
- Slide Handout: Who are the Challenging Clients?
- Handout Who Are the Challenging Clients?
- Slide Three Objectives with Challenging Clients
- Slide Reflective Listening
- Slide Specifics of Reflective Listening
- Slide Explaining Reflective Listening
- Slide Conclusive Sounding Statements
SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

This is the longest session and it addresses the toughest part of CPS – engaging and interviewing challenging clients. Demonstrations are provided. The concepts of resistance and non resistance related to client behavior and interview behavior are thoroughly examined and considered. Major emphasis is given to reflective listening. **Hours of practice and application** occur in this session.
SESSION 6
...AND IN SUMMARY

Estimated Time Day 3  1:30 – 3:00  (90 minutes)

OBJECTIVES

- To summarize and emphasize interviewing skills presented throughout the workshop.
- To contrast interviewing skills and styles with those less likely to effectively gather information.
- To challenge participants to identify skills from this workshop that could effectively replace ineffective approaches.
- To conclude the workshop with a lighthearted learning experience.
- To complete participant workshop evaluations.

ORDER/OVERVIEW

1. Exercise: You say pot-aa-to and I say pot-ah-to (90 minutes)

RESOURCES

- Slide  Session 6: ...And in Summary
- Slide  Session 6 Objectives
- Slide  Workshop Interviewing Ideas and Techniques
- Slide  Video Demonstration: Have You Seen These Interviewing Styles?
- Video  Have You Seen These Interviewing Styles?
- Slide  As You Watch the Video Consider....
- Slide  Practice Team Presentations
- Slide  Handout: Workshop Evaluation
- Handout  Workshop Evaluation
- Slide  Thank You for Your Kind Participation
- Handout  References and Sources

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

This closing session summarizes concepts and techniques and explores with participants styles and approaches that are common in CPS yet are not productive. A fun spirited exercise wraps up the workshop in which participants evaluate the quality of interviewing as they evaluate the workshop itself.