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Basic Skills for Direct Practice



WESTEND61/GETTY IMAGES

For social workers, the key to working effectively with clients is developing expertise in the basic skills of communication. This involves formal academic education, professional training, and supervision. During the interview process, the social worker connects with the client through the use of empathic responses such as **reflection of feelings, paraphrasing, and attending behaviors**. Using skills effectively requires knowing when it is appropriate to use the skill by gauging (or anticipating) the client's likely response. This level of expertise takes considerable effort to develop. Social work **interviewing skills** requires both the discipline to practice and the faith that you will develop the skills that enable you to move forward with confidence. This chapter introduces you to foundational interviewing skills and attending behaviors with a focus on understanding the way information is transmitted and received.

ATTENDING BEHAVIORS

As you begin reading this chapter, watch this clip where the instructor introduces you to the concept of attending to the client through the use of the social worker's nonverbal communication. What are the main purposes for both verbal and nonverbal messages?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate attending behaviors.
- Demonstrate interviewing skills.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Attending Behaviors

Body Positioning and Spatial Considerations

Touch

Tone of Voice

Silence

Furthering Responses

Facial Expressions, Eye Contact, and Head Movements

Interviewing Skills

Lead-In Responses

Paraphrasing

Reflection of Feelings

Open-Ended Questions

Closed-Ended Questions

Clarification

Summary