

**?** Assess your understanding of attending behaviors by taking this brief quiz.

up and down offers a sense that the social worker is listening and agreeing. Because the client feels understood, the communication is likely to continue. Shaking of the head from left to right may convey that the social worker disagrees or disapproves, causing the communication to stop or be severely limited.

Now that you have finished reading this section, watch these clips. You will see the attending skills of eye contact and head nodding demonstrated by Nicole and Karen. Following each clip, listen to the narration, which provides the context to understand how and why this attending behavior was used as a way to convey interest in the client's situation.

- ▶ Nodding
- ▶ Eye Contact

## INTERVIEWING SKILLS

In this section, students will be introduced to lead-in responses and basic interviewing skills. How to use these skills in a meaningful and productive way will be described and illustrated throughout the remainder of the chapter.

### Lead-In Responses

Now that you have some understanding of attending behaviors, let's look at **lead-in responses**, which are the introductory part of a sentence stem or question that begins the social worker's response to the client. Lead-in responses give the social worker an opportunity to match the client's verbal style (Brenns, 2001). It is helpful to develop a wide variety of lead-in responses so that you are not repeating the same ones over and over. See Box 5.3 for examples of lead-in responses organized by sensory categories. Experienced interviewers can adjust their responses to match a client's primary sensory orientation—for example, if a client seems most focused on the physical, then kinesthetic responses are indicated (e.g., "I could feel . . ."); for clients who seem to think more visually, visual lead-in responses (e.g., saying "I see") are an effective strategy (Brenns, 2001).

When meeting a client for the first time or during subsequent visits, small talk is a good way to "break the ice" or start off on safe topics. Asking about the weather or commenting on traffic or the pictures on the walls in the client's home are examples of small talk. This is a time that is used to put the client at ease as you gently begin to guide the client toward the purpose of the interview. Box 5.4 provides a sample agenda for your review.

### Box 5.3 Lead-In Responses

Auditory	Kinesthetic	Visual
What I am hearing you say . . .	Could you feel . . . ?	I am observing . . .
As I hear it . . .	You feel . . .	I detect . . .
You sound . . .	I gather . . .	From where you are watching . . .
Does this ring a bell . . . ?	From where you stand . . .	I noticed . . .
From what I am hearing . . .	Right now, you feel . . .	From your point of view . . .
It echoes the sound of . . .	I sense that . . .	I imagine . . .
You are telling me . . .	I have the feeling . . .	You are focused on . . .
It sounds like . . .	I gather . . .	Am I perceiving this correctly . . . ?
It sounds as if . . .	From where you are . . .	As I see it . . .
Sounds to me . . .	Am I close . . . ?	My sense is that . . .
I hear you saying . . .	I am drawing . . .	It seems like . . .
If I am hearing you correctly . . .	You felt . . .	You are considering . . .
It sounds as though you are saying . . .	<b>General</b>	You are describing . . .
	Correct me if I am wrong . . .	It appears as though . . .
	Could it be . . . ?	It looks like . . .
	I wonder what else . . .	Following what you just said . . .
	I am wondering if . . .	I see what you mean . . .
	Go on . . .	You appear . . .
	And . . .	

### Box 5.4 A Sample Agenda for Meeting with a Client

1. Welcome and small talk.
2. General open-ended questions about the client.
3. Ask if there are issues the client wants to cover.
4. Review "homework" assignments from previous session and determine level of progress or barriers.
5. Discuss new ideas and strategies toward progress.
6. Offer ideas and suggestions as appropriate; reaffirming the client's strengths and efforts.
7. Provide time to discuss extraneous issues that may be a factor in goal attainment. For example, to an adolescent female, how are her classes going at school? Her babysitting schedule? Her relationships with friends, foster parents, and siblings? Extracurricular activities? How are all of these issues related to her remaining sober?
8. Check to see if there are any other pressing issues.
9. Wrap up what was discussed and plan of what needs to be done prior to the next session.
10. Close the session and document the required aspects of your session. For more about this, read Appendix A at the back of the book on how to document a session.