



Creating Interest: Engaging in discussions around work & school

This tip sheet's purpose is to get a discussion going with the person around their thoughts and feelings about employment. Developing a rapport and comfort with the person around the topic of employment will be beneficial to demonstrate to the person that you are available to assist them when they are ready. Where is the person at with their thinking around employment? These tips will help you have a starting point when talking about employment or school with a person participating in services.



1. Discussions with the Person



The following are some example questions to use as prompts to start a conversation. Focus mainly on gathering information by listening. Use your active listening skills and reflect and encourage the person to do most of the talking (see Active listening skills box).

- What are your thoughts about going to work/school?
- What kind of work would you like to do? Tell me what about that job interests you?
- What kind of help do you think you need?
- How soon would you like to start working?
(prompt if needed: Now, In three months, In six months?)



2. After Meeting with the Person

Identify some next steps.

- Will the person meet with you again to talk more about their employment goals?
- What types of supports are in your agency or in the community that might support the person's career interests if you do not provide direct employment services?

Helpful Tips to Remember

The information you obtain, particularly about their interests in returning to work and what they see as important, can be used if the person expresses ambivalence.

Remember to add this information to the notes to make sure others on the team are familiar with the person's current career interests and you can remember this for future discussions.

It is entirely feasible that individuals may not want to talk with you about employment or school. This discussion prompt is not intended to force individuals to talk about something they may not want to have at this time.

Creating Interest:

Engaging in discussions around work & school

Incorporate This Lesson

Have a discussion around employment and school with at least two individuals participating in services.

Make sure to carve out time to meet with the person in a comfortable environment, which may be in the community, outdoors during a walk, in the office, or other space in your agency.



Review with your supervisor the two people you spoke with and the outcome. Specifically, what did you learn? What are some next steps you and the person planned? What additional resources do you need to support the person?

2 SOLER

Make sure you are using your SOLER when possible. Your body language when speaking with someone helps to build rapport and trust that they are being heard.

- S** –Squaring with person
- O** –Open Stance
- L** –Lean In
- E** –Eye Contact
- R** –Reflections



Active Listening Skills

Reflections are statements that reflect back what the person is telling you. It helps to break up too many questions and allows more opportunity to hear from the person and their thoughts, feelings, and meaning behind the words. Here are some guidelines about active listening.

1 Reflections

CONTENT

Reflecting on the content of what the person is telling you.



FEELING

Reflecting what the person is feeling (feeling words include excited, apprehensive, motivated, anxious, concerned, happy, enthusiastic).

You feel _____.

MEANING

Reflecting the feeling and content together.

You feel _____ because _____.



Sources: Carkhuff, R.R. (2019). The art of helping (10th ed.), Amherst: HRD Press, Inc. ISBN: 1610144252).

Egan, G. & Reese, R. J. (2019). The skilled helper. A Problem-Management and Opportunity Development Approach to Helping (11th ed.) Cengage Learning Inc. 3, ISBN: 978-1-305-86571-6
For more information on soler: <https://atraineeecounselor.wordpress.com/2016/02/27/counseling-basics-soler/?msclkid=87d42f12b04311ec855f66abff4b7f36>