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HS 325

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Interview #2 Self Evaluation

Coming to this interview, I found myself quite comfortable. I see a marked progress in my interviewing skills since my first interview, but there is still a lot of room for improvement. I was able to apply knowledge acquired in the classroom as well as elements from the book *Interviewing in Action in a Multicultural World* (*2011*).

This interview took place with my interviewee directly in front of me, a small table in between us. I put in practice the SOLER form of non-verbal communication from my class notes ( J. Deiro, personal communication, Fall Quarter, 2013). I decided, however, to turn my body to the right at about a 30-degree angle hoping this would make me seem less imposing in my interviewee's eyes. The distance between us was comfortable, and the place was somewhat busy, so I leaned forward slightly in order to hear him better.

For the purpose of this interview, I am a general social worker at a low-income-clinic and Matt has stopped by after seeing one of the physicians. Matt is experiencing stress. He feels that attending school is getting him nowhere now, and he wants to be out on the streets protesting and supporting causes he believes crucial to change the world. He recognizes that by joining a protest, he is risking getting a criminal record if the police arrest him.

I begin with a strong opening, in which I greet Matt, state my name, talk about confidentiality and set the time parameter ( J. Deiro, personal communication, Fall Quarter, 2013). I ask Matt to talk to me about anything he wants. It is surprising to me that the number of "um" utterances on my part is minimal, and I can hear confidence and control in my voice. I find myself uttering supporting words, such as "right" or "yes" and sounds like, "uh- huh" and "hmm". These sounds, according to Murphy and Dillon (2011) make our client know that we are paying attention. I hear myself paraphrasing, and I am happy to see the positive response I obtain from my client. I say, "So you are telling me that there are better things you could be doing with your time instead of being in school." My client nods letting me know I understand what he means. Recalling the information in my class notes, I ask an open-ended question geared to clarify his feelings and motives: "What exactly makes you feel you are wasting your time in school?" ( J. Deiro, personal communication, Fall Quarter, 2013). My client tells me he feels the things he is studying in school should be common sense and human beings should be treating each other with respect and be caring towards one another always.

Another strength I identify is the use of clarification and refocusing. Since our interview lasted for about 15 minutes, I want to make sure my client expresses what expectations he has of our meeting. He responds that he just wants to vent. According to Murphy and Dillon, (2011) when clinical interventions are brief, it is critical to conduct focused interviews. I state that our meeting has about five minutes left and ask him if he thinks he can benefit from a second meeting. He declines and thanks me for my time. I wish him well and tell him I am available if he changes his mind.

There are areas that need improvement, such as differentiating when I am stating a consequence and when I am trying to offer advice. For example, when asking my client if he realizes that putting himself at risk of arrest during public demonstrations could end his career or the prospect of a career. I ask him if his loved ones are worried about him dropping out of school, and he replies that they are concerned that he can go to jail. I also fail at exploring more because I do not ask him to tell me the causes he supports. It is only near the end of our interview that I ask him what his major in college is, and he tells me that he is majoring in human services. I think that information is important, and I overlook some important aspects of it. I may be trying to find out things that are not at the center of his issue, such as what the family thinks of him risking his freedom. I do not ask Matt if he thinks this session has helped him at all, even if it is just to vent.

I am happy to see that I have addressed several of the points covered in class and some of the goals I set for myself from the first interview. I feel more comfortable knowing that there is a structure of the interviewing stages (J. Deiro, personal communication, Fall Quarter 2013). I have a much better insight into the things I need to reinforce, and I know that practice and experience will help. This interview is an extremely helpful exercise, and I recognize that there will be challenges, and no one has all the answers. I must strive to learn more and accept that we learn a lot from our mistakes. I have to stop being afraid of making mistakes. The learning process in this career never ends, and I have to embrace that. I am grateful for all the tools I have acquired in such a short time, and I know I am on the right path because I feel supported by my teachers and my classmates.

Reference

Murphy, B. C., & Dillon, C. (2011). *Interviewing in action in a multicultural world.* (4th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole