

Eight Tasks in Learning Motivational Interviewing

This is content from Miller and Moyers (2006) that can be useful in conceptualizing training. Where is the trainee or audience currently in this developmental process? What tasks will be addressed in this training? These tasks can also provide a framework for developing a sequence of training.

1	Overall Spirit of MI	Openness to a way of thinking and working that is collaborative rather than prescriptive, honors the client's autonomy and self-direction, and is more about evoking than installing. This involves at least a willingness to suspend an authoritarian role, and to explore client capacity rather than incapacity, with a genuine interest in the client's experience and perspectives.
2	OARS: Client-Centered Counseling Skills	Proficiency in client-centered counseling skills to provide a supportive and facilitative atmosphere in which clients can safely explore their experience and ambivalence. This involves the comfortable practice of open-ended questions, affirmation, summaries, and particularly the skill of accurate empathy as described by Carl Rogers.
3	Recognizing Change Talk and Sustain Talk	Ability to identify client "change talk" and commitment language that signals movement in the direction of behavior change, as well as client sustain talk. Preparatory change talk includes desire, ability, reasons, and need for change, which favor increased strength of commitment.
4	Eliciting and Strengthening Change Talk	Ability to evoke and reinforce client change talk and commitment language. Here the client-centered OARS skills are applied strategically, to differentially strengthen change talk and commitment.
5	Rolling with Sustain Talk and Resistance	Ability to respond to client sustain talk and resistance in a manner that reflects and respects without reinforcing it. The essence is to roll with rather than opposing it.
6	Developing a Change Plan	Making the transition into Phase 2 of MI. Ability to recognize client readiness, and to negotiate a specific change plan that is acceptable and appropriate to the client. This involves timing as well as negotiation skills.
7	Consolidating Commitment	Ability to elicit increasing strength of client commitment to change, and to specific implementation intentions.
8	Transition and Blending	Ability to blend an MI style with other intervention methods and to transition flexibly between MI and other approaches.

Sources: Miller, W.R. & Moyers, T.B. (2007). Eight stages in learning Motivational Interviewing. *Journal of Teaching in the Addictions*, (5), 3-17.

Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers, Training for New Trainers (TNT), Resources for Trainers, 2008.