

PROBATION DEPARTMENT ADULT MANUAL

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Notes and References

Interviewing and Communication for Effective Supervision

I. Scope and Manner of Interview

- A. When planning and conducting any interview, the supervision officer should be guided by the primary objectives of probation supervision which is the protection of the community and rehabilitation of the defendant.
- B. An important tool of probation supervision is effective verbal communication. In many cases, professional services are provided by referrals to other agencies for specialized treatment and intervention.
- C. There are many approaches to interviewing and counseling. Various techniques may be appropriate so long as they meet the following requirements:

- 1. It is rehabilitative; i.e., aims to bring about a law-abiding and socially responsible behavior. For example, utilization of Motivational Interviewing techniques are highly recommended:

Motivational Interviewing (M.I.) techniques are part of Evidence Based Practices (EBP) and interventions. Understanding and skillful execution of M.I. is a proven strategy that guides officers to the appropriate level of intervention, services and supervision. Officers should focus on criminogenic factors, as these are the areas that most commonly present barriers to rehabilitation. The top criminogenic factors to be considered are:

- a. Anti-social values and behaviors.
 - b. Negative Peer Influences.
 - c. Low self control.
 - d. Dysfunctional family ties.
 - e. Substance abuse.
 - f. Criminal thinking.
- 2. It is honest, professional and goal-oriented. The roles of the supervision officer and probationer must be clearly defined, and the purpose and goals of their relationship is explicit. Expectations and responsibilities of the probationer are thoroughly explained, then reviewed with the probationer to insure understanding and compliance. This is an opportunity to address issues, questions and

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Probation Portal,
Professional
Standards Unit
tab,
“Motivational
Interviewing”

<https://probweb.co.santa-barbara.ca.us/sites/home2/PSU-Public/SitePages/Home.aspx>

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concerns and secure the probationer's concurrence, or "buy-in" to setting goals for success.

3. It maintains a focus on situational awareness. The supervision officer is attentive to safety considerations when interviewing volatile or otherwise agitated clients and alert to signs of mental illness or substance abuse. If needed, monitoring of the interview should be arranged with another officer for safety purposes.

II. Documenting the Interview

- A. Significant information resulting from interviews is documented in IMPACT Events.

1. Documenting information as a result of contact with probationers and any other collateral contacts or pertinent information is made mandatory not only by legal requirements, but also by the necessity to maintain case continuity. In the event the case is transferred to another officer, historical information is needed to determine the probationer's compliance with Court, probation orders and goals of any treatment plan. On those occasions when an officer is required to testify in Court, reliance upon the maintenance of accurate and complete case notes is essential.
2. Whenever possible, case entries will be documented immediately following the interview or contact, to ensure impressions and recollections are fresh and accurate. In no case should documentation be unnecessarily delayed.

III. Interview Follow-up

- A. After an interview, the supervision officer may need to integrate the content of the contact into the Case or Treatment Plan.

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- B. Whenever possible, recently obtained case information should be evaluated with the following considerations in mind:
1. Have new problems or violations been identified?
 2. Are there changes in case objectives/goals?
 3. Have terms and conditions been met?
 4. Should a change in classification be considered?

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