Welcome
Michigan WIC Program
Client-Centered Webinar Series
Webinar 5: Effective Communication Skills
(with clients and coworkers)
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Guidelines
▲ Phones on mute
▲ Raise hands
▲ Chat box

The Plan
▲ Topic area: communicating effectively
▲ What messages to communicate? How?
▲ Communicating over the phone
▲ Communicating with co-workers

Belief Systems Impact our Communication
• Example: I do everything in my power to help participants receive WIC benefits.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

- Maya Angelou

The Messages We Want to Communicate
You are welcome here
I am glad you’re here
You are valued
I will help you through the process
I am in your corner
Communicate respect
Listen fully
Compliment / affirm

Respect
- Treat everyone with respect
- Treat the customer with dignity and respect.
- Letting them know they are important and treating them the way I want to be treated.

Words
Body Language
Tone

“We have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen more than we say.”
-Zeno of Citium

The Body Language of Listening
- Undivided attention
- Eye contact

“Good eye contact. Speak slowly. Smile. Face the client. Take my hands off the computer keyboard. Listen carefully.”

Listening
- First, listening to what they have to say. Showing them that I'm listening (eye contact, smiling, nodding). This usually gets a reciprocation when it's my turn to share info.
- Listen to the client and ensuring them you understand their problem.
- Effective listening and understanding the client request.
- Pause and listen, then answer. Listen to understand not to answer.
Listening

- Listen carefully
- Let the person tell you what they want to say
- Listen for emotion
- Listen with reflections
- Hold problem solving for the right time

The 10 Foot Rule

Compliments

- Show your appreciation and understanding
- Empower others
- Increase self-responsibility
- Strengthen relationships
- Make you likable
- Communicate your belief in the client’s ability and can influence their behavior

Affirmation Examples

Thank you for your patience.

You are one step ahead of the game, all your documents and early for your appointment.

You have worked really hard to__________

Affirmations

- Explain the process
- Reduce jargon
- Keep people informed (e.g., wait time)
- Offer future support
Explaining the Process

- Always greeting the client, explain what is about to happen and ask if this is ok.
- Sharing the ins and outs of the program. Answering questions or if I don’t know the answer, tell them I’ll find out and get back with them. Then actually doing it!

Cultivating Empathy

- Putting yourself in their shoes to understand their perspective.
- You have to understand that things that are not a challenge to you are a challenge to them! you don’t know what it took for some of them to get to the appointment. sometimes they just need someone to listen to them.
- Put yourself in their shoes, realize that most of them live day to day.
- I like to let them know I was a previous WIC client. In doing so, I feel it makes them feel like I know where they are coming from and we can relate to each other.

Effective Phone Communication

- Listen to the caller and not being distracted by what’s going on around you. Repeat a question or information back to them, affirming you’re listening.
- Speaking as clear and calmly as possible.
- Repeating important information and making sure I understand exactly what the client is saying.
- Reflect what they have said. Clarify their question. Ask ‘what else can I help you with today?” and/or ‘Did I help you get done what you were hoping to get done today?’
- Smile
The Duchenne Smile

Effective Phone Communication
- Tell them your name
- Positive tone
- Speak clearly
- Watch for filler words
- Avoid WIC speak
- Adjust your language to fit the listener

Effective Phone Communication
- Writing things down
- Eating, drinking, chewing gum
- Use their name
- Finishing the conversation
- Leaving a message and phone number

Communicating with Co-Workers

Body Language / Tone
- Eye contact
- Body language differs from words
- Learn from others
- Tone
- Read the cues

Choosing our Words
- “You should have”, “You could have”
- “I can’t do that”, “That’s impossible”, “That can’t be done”
- “I don’t have time for this right now”, “I don’t have time to talk to you right now”
- “That’s not my job”, “That’s not my problem”
- “I may be wrong but…”, “This may be a dumb question but…”
Poll Question: Reflecting Motivation

1. “That won't work”

Co-Workers Not Pulling their Weight

- Co-workers not sharing the work evenly. Putting most of the work on others.
- Having more work than others.
- Laziness: “not my job” mentality.

Co-Workers Not Pulling their Weight

- Avoid complaining
- Analyze impact
- Create relationship
- Talk to co-worker
  - When you do this, this happens (lead with facts)
- Talk to supervisor / manager
- Don’t let it impact your attitude

Be the Change

- Build trust
- Be honest
- Be kind
- Be open
- Respect others
- Do your best

Communicating Effectively with Co-Workers

- Be respectful and listen carefully to each other.
- Taking a step back at times.
- Try to be open minded.
- Except everyone’s little traits.
- Always assume good intent first. Listen instead of thinking about what to say next. Don’t complain without having a suggestion on how to fix the problem.

Don’t Let Emotions Rule You

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. – Victor Frankl
Never Stop Growing

Time to Share
• Questions
• Strategies
• Tips

Thank You