



Webinar C5 – Engaging Families Using Motivational Interviewing Strategies and Principles

Question and Answer

Question 1 - Are there "train the trainer" resources for Motivational Interviewing (MI)?

Answer: The Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT) does provide a Training of New Trainers as part of its annual forum. The new trainers are given resources including access to the MINT listserv and a resource guide with useful exercises.

Question 2 - Are there any resources where we could find hypothetical scenarios to help staff practice these skills?

Answer: The best scenarios to use for practice would be the ones your staff face the most often. What types of behavior are they trying to motivate people to do? Role playing these situations and having the person in the role of the helping professional try to use open-ended questions, affirmations, reflections, and a spirit of partnership is a good first step. After role playing, the staff could debrief how it felt from each perspective and reflect on whether the person in the helping role evoked change talk and ideas for how to reach goals from the person considering making change.

Additional Resources:

[Motivational Interviewing Professional Training DVD Series](#)

[Motivational Interviewing, Third Edition: Helping People Change](#)

[Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook](#)

[University of California: UC Davis: Video clips of Motivational Interviewing](#)

Question 3 - Is there a Motivational Interviewer database that programs could use to locate certified trainers?

Answer: The website [motivational interviewing](#) provides information on research, a database of trainers that can be searched by location or expertise, and other training resources. Currently, unlike other evidence-based models, Motivational Interviewing does not certify trainers. A person applies, is selected, and completes the training of new trainers and then is eligible to join the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT). Using a MINT member to provide training ensures that the trainer has strong Motivational Interviewing skills and access to MINT resources. In the future there may be a certification process.

Question 4 - How long does it take for a staff person to become proficient in motivational interviewing?

Answer: Some people may have a natural response to helping others with making decisions that is similar to Motivational Interviewing and they may quickly demonstrate considerable skills. Other people may find the model a big change from their current way of working with people and may be resistant to adopting it. These types of individual differences would have a significant impact on how long it takes for a particular staff person to become proficient in motivational interviewing. Those helping professionals who receive coaching and feedback in addition to their training about Motivational Interviewing are much more likely to successfully implement Motivational Interviewing than those who just receive training.

Question 5 - What are some strategies or approaches for increasing staff buy in with using the Motivational Interviewing approach?

Answer: One key strategy is first getting administrative buy-in. Begin by either giving administrators an overview of motivational interviewing by showing them the vBTT Webinar C5: Engaging Families Using Motivational Interviewing (MI) Strategies and Principles or the *'Tooth Talk Moments'* video on youtube.com, or both. Then, it is recommended that all supervisors of staff who work most directly with families and the area specialists (disabilities, health, mental health) also have at least an overview plus some skill building. The more people who are "speaking the language" of motivational interviewing, the more likely direct service staff will receive a consistent message about what MI is and how to know when it is being used. The family services and home visiting staff need ongoing reflective supervision and coaching to be able to talk about the challenges that arise and to receive supportive guidance when needed. Staff also needs acceptable workloads so they can plan for conversations with families and be intentional and fully present in each interaction. Teaching staff should also be provided with an overview of MI. Enrollment and goal-setting paperwork can be reviewed and revised to include more open-ended questions so staff are guided by the forms to use the MI approach.

Question 6 - What can a home visitor say to redirect a parent when they are not focused on the conversation and easily distracted?

Answer: One suggestion to start a session with parents who are unfocused is by acknowledging that their time is valuable and that your role is to help them support their child in being prepared for school. Then staff can further ask the parent what his/her priorities are for the time together. If the parent's focus wanders, staff can remind the parent of what she/he hoped to spend the time on and ask the parent how that could best be achieved. The parent may have ideas about how to reduce the distracting elements of the environment. It is important to assess whether the parent or caregiver is avoiding the key subject for some reason, is distracted by something in the environment, or has difficulty focusing in general and adapt responses accordingly. A supervisor or area specialist can join staff for a visit. This can be an effective way to get feedback about staff/parent interactions and to find out if another person's interaction style helps to keep the parent's focus.

Question 7 - Describe the importance of being non-judgmental in motivational interviewing?

Answer: When people feel judged, they have a natural tendency to want to defend themselves against the judgment. . This is the antithesis of Motivational Interviewing where the goal is to evoke change talk and allow people to explore their desire, ability, reason and need to make change.