

# Different approaches to modelling as a form of counselling training



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Throughout their training, trainee counselors may be exposed to various influences from other counselors. Each counselor needs to adapt their skills to the counseling setting, to develop their own genuine style. Trainee counselors and trainers in counseling training programs are expected to be committed to the social values of respect for diversity, inclusion, and equity. They are also expected to be committed to critical thinking and the process of self-examination of their own attitudes, assumptions, behaviors and values.

They are expected to learn to work effectively with cultural, individual, and role differences, as well as to acquire and utilize professionally relevant knowledge and skills regardless of their beliefs, attitudes, and values.

Counselors may model appropriate self-disclosure and introspection with their trainees. This may include discussions about real life experiences, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, feelings, and personal histories.

Role plays allow trainees to apply new knowledge and skills in situations that simulate those they encounter at work, which helps facilitate transfer of learning to the workplace for improved on-the-job performance. Unlike case studies, in which trainees carefully analyze a situation before responding, role plays require trainees to react to situations in the moment when applying information and procedures they have learned.

Role plays also help facilitate transfer of learning by giving trainees opportunities to practice in a safe, non-threatening environment where it is permissible to make mistakes, work in small groups and observe the

facilitator or an experienced trainee demonstrate the provider role, which helps trainees to be comfortable trying out new approaches.

They can become confident using job aids and tools to facilitate performance of work tasks, receive targeted feedback and support after each time they role-play a provider; such immediate feedback is crucial for trainees to achieve a high level of proficiency and attain workplace performance expectations. Trainees could rotate roles within their groups. If the small groups are each working on different role plays, the groups can pass their role play materials to the next group.

As far as videotaping is concerned, the main advantages include a high level of accuracy of observations, a high level of detail regarding therapist and client interactions, its potential for enhancement of supervisory processes, and the easy accessibility of audio/video materials. The greatest advantage of using audio/video playback in supervision is the level of objectivity that recorded sessions provide.

Although using videotape in new counselor training can have benefits, there are some difficulties, such as resistance to taping, distortion of the supervision process, a disruption of the counseling relationship, and technical difficulties. Metaphorically speaking, modeling itself can be a double – edged sword. On one side, it can be highly useful, but on the other side, if trainee counselors are merely copying other counselor's skills without any reflection on relevance and what is appropriate in each individual client's case, then the counseling session may cause more harm than good.