

Free essay on service orientation

Profession



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10 Skills That a Human Services Professional Must Have

Every profession especially in the human service sector needs certain skills to ensure that the service been offered is highly effective and efficiently satisfies the needs of the client. This paper will focus on ten skills that a social worker should have so as to work effectively and fit efficiently in any place of work.

Communication

One is communication. This being the avenue that people use to convey messages or information, it is very vital to social work. The social worker must be a very good communicator; one who can easily read and interpret the non-verbal cues, gestures, tonal variations and body posture of clients. At times when the issues that a client is facing are too traumatizing and they can't effectively communicate using words; these non-verbal cues clearly show the emotional disposition of the client towards the traumatic situation. Thus a social worker who understands non-verbal cues easily understands the emotional state of the client. This improves the relationship between the client and the organization.

Additionally, if the community she works in speaks a different language as compared to her native language, he/she should learn this other language so as to be well understood by the community. Learning and speaking his/her community's language is an advantage to his/her as he/she will be viewed as an insider and thus be open towards him/her allowing them to freely inform him/her about issues in the community that may need her intervention. In terms of introducing a new policy, when working in local government agencies; communication facilitates not only effectual passing of information

to the community in a detailed easily understood way but also allows for feedback that predicts the adoption or rejection of the policy.

Service Orientation is another skill that a social worker needs to develop and enhance. The professional should always focus on providing services to the client. He/She must be able to assess the client well so as to get to know of any areas they need assistance. Some of the areas may include economic empowerment seminars to the community so as to equip them with skills that can help them start a business, make a profit and sustain themselves and their families. This is more effective as compared to just giving them money to solve their immediate needs with no consideration of tomorrow. The professional also assesses the services offered in schools, medical institutions or local government agencies so as to see how effectively they are serving the community and if the community needs are being met. In areas where the services aren't up to the required standard, a professional can propose methods or ways to improve the services.

Furthermore in service evaluation, a professional can assess if employees in a certain organization are delivering services effectively. He/She may also introduce services to institutions that he/she deems necessary to the functioning of that institution. In terms of finances he/she can mobilize, budget and allocate finances for the successful delivery of any or all services in a particular institution. In an administrative capacity he/she can focus on the formulation of certain programs that will ensure certain services to the community. Such programs are aimed at alleviating certain social problems that community members may be facing, such as lack of housing, school fees, and inadequate access to health care and health facilities.

Empathy

Empathy where a professional is able to identify with the client's situation is very important. This helps the social worker to understand what the client feels and objectively come up with unique strategies in which to deal with the problem. On a larger scale as she deals with a certain community; understanding the community and issues the community is facing will help her come up with solutions; like trainings or workshops or seminars or programs that will effectively serve the community. Additionally in post-evaluation of certain tragic events, empathy aids the social worker to understand the underlying sentiments of the perpetrators and of the victims so as to strategize on coming up with ways on how to help the victims and also prevent the occurrence of a similar event.

If introducing a certain policy to a community, empathy helps the social worker to understand the community, its culture, political and social-economic systems. (Lewis, 2006) These will help the professional tailor-make a policy that will effectively serve that particular community and alleviate a particular issue. She will ensure that the policy is made for that particular community, which would otherwise be very difficult for a professional who lacks empathy for the community she works in as she fails to understand the community. Compassion will also ensure that the professional gives her very best as she diligently works in service of her community; going the extra mile as she clearly understands how much the community needs the policy, the particulars of how the policy will work and how much it will benefit them.

Complex problem solving

Solving complex problems is an essential skill the profession of social work. Problem- solving as a skill entails that the professional be capable of identification of hindrances to attaining a particular objective and coming up with ways to eradicate hindrances. The community being an intricate system of subsystems tends to have complex problems. Therefore the professional should be well informed of the various problem solving strategies such as abstraction and lateral thought patterns so as to find solutions to the problems, as she is in a profession whose core objective is to deal with issues especially in the community. Furthermore when a social worker is able to eradicate a problem effectively, he/she can be transferred to a different organization that is facing the same problem to offer assistance.

The professional should be in a position to solve disputes between employees and misunderstanding between the community and the organization in case of administrative capacities. This is quite important as once problems are solved the organization it can get back to its normal functioning as it serves the community. Disagreements between the organization and the community are quite harmful as the community loses faith in the organization and thus hindering its activities. Once the dispute is solved courtesy of the social worker, the community's trust is restored and the community can now allow the organization to continue helping them. Additionally, successful problem solving allows preventive measures to be taken to ensure that such a circumstance doesn't occur, and if it were to happen the professional is well aware of how to effectively deal with it.

Active listening

Active listening is whereby the social worker gives undivided attention to the clients. So as to understand what the person is saying. Active listening entails certain aspects like: asking of questions, talking and using reflection. Asking questions allows the professional to get specific answers that will inform him/her more about the issue the person. Secondly talking allows the professional to confirm to the client that she has understood what the client is saying, thus the client feels understood and important. Thirdly reflection allows for the professional to confirm with the client what he or she has said, this also gives an avenue for the client to correct any incorrect information received by the social worker. (Gibelman, 2005)

In institutions such as schools or organizations, active listening aids in the effectual communication, a social worker with good active listening skills is able to understand information passed from one student to another, or from one employee to another, or an employer correctly. It also allows for her to identify communication breakdowns in an organization and offer the right solutions to improve communication within the school or organization. Additionally it allows the social worker at to offer solutions to problems that have arisen from the breakdown of communication. She is also able to train other professionals in other fields on these active listening skills so as to improve communication among employees and employers in their organizations or teachers or students in schools or in the community and therefore reduce the rates of miscommunication and eventually a few disputes that arise from miscommunication. Active listening is an essential part of a social worker's skill set as it aids in effective interaction with other people they relate with.

Monitoring and assessment

This is the monitoring or assessment of services. A social worker should be well equipped with assessment tools or methods that evaluate service delivery in certain organizations. This assessment allows the social worker to know whether the services that an organization is offering are meeting the organizational goals or adequately satisfying the needs of the community. In case they aren't, he/she should propose possible detailed ways to improve their service delivery. Apart from assessment, the social worker should be able to evaluate and assess whether she is delivering the service effectively and meeting the community's needs; if not she should be in a position to improve her skill set or expertise through personal development by attending workshops, seminars or trainings to improve service delivery. She should also be in a position to monitor services offered by organizations by tracking the development in the community in relation to the organization's services. Closely tracking services so as to see if they are being delivered appropriately following the stipulated procedures in the organization's quality of standards document, employees' activities in this organization should also be tracked or monitored in order to see if they are delegating their duties appropriately as required by the organization. If they aren't the social worker should approach them and propose ways to improve their service delivery or performance of their duties. This monitoring is an important skill as it helps the social worker to monitor the organization's progress, employees or other individuals, as well as himself/herself and suggest on improvement strategies to upgrade the functioning of the organization or productivity and service delivery of employees and oneself in

respect to the community receiving services from the organization or the social worker.

Social perception

Social perception is important for a social worker as it allows her to comprehend the world around her. Comprehension of the world around the social worker helps her identify certain issues that are within an organization; what were the key factors that may have contributed to the issues. In interactions with other individuals this skill helps the social worker understand why people interact as they do. This understanding enables him/her to gain knowledge on how to handle or deal with an employee who is acting violent in a certain circumstance. Additionally it facilitates client intervention as the professional is able to understand why the client is reacting as he/she is doing and how he/she as a professional should intervene in the issue of the client. (Delamate, Michener & Myers, 2003)

In global social work, social perception is essential when dealing with refugees. As a professional interacts with these refugees, he/she has to understand the refugees might be skeptical about any help being offered by certain organizations or individuals as they have experienced trauma. In addition this skill will help them as the social worker strives to integrate the refugee back into the community, as she will be quite sensitive in the placement areas due to the past experiences the refugee has undergone. In the same field the skill will help the professional find and identify suitable homes for adoption of orphans. Self perception of orphans in the adoption service helps the professional understand them, the problems they are facing and issues that are likely to come up in the orphan's life. And thus

eventually the most appropriate family setting for the orphan's adoption with minimal problems and difficult circumstances for the orphan to thrive in.

Critical thinking

Critical thinking helps the social worker to analyze certain social problems critically. This type of thought allows the social worker to apply logical thought to certain issues. She looks at the issues the community is facing and seeks various solutions. Critical thinking facilitates an in-depth look into the proposed solutions and evaluating their advantages and disadvantages in relation to each other. This ensures that the social worker picks the most advantageous and least disadvantaging solution to the issue. The same is applied in administrative work, a community issue is identified and the social worker pits the solutions against each other and picks the most advantageous solution to the problem. This skill also allows the professional to impact the same skill on her client or improve the skill in her client or other individuals in the organization, thus improving the overall functioning of the organization and the individual as he or she is able to criticize different solutions to issues in his or her life.

Critical thinking deals with both deductive and inductive reasoning, in that if approached with an issue that needs diverse solutions the social worker can reason either based on convergent or divergent thought patterns as proposed by these two types of reasoning. This type of reasoning allows for different solutions that can be used in diverse and numerous situations due to the varied problems currently in society. In terms of proposing policies for the community the same methods of reasoning, deductive and inductive can be used to formulate policies that an organization can implement for the

community. Application of critical thinking strategies assists any professional in dealing with unstructured problems. As a result, he/she will always be able to come up with solutions regardless of the complexity of the problem.

Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension facilitates social worker to understand information written in documents. This is quite helpful as it enables the social worker to read between the lines especially in agreements between organizations as they seek to alleviate problems in the society or donors who are seeking to help out needy individuals in the community. Thus the social worker can advise the concerned parties about what is clearly stipulated in the agreement and thus providing protecting from exploitation that may have otherwise been hidden from the client. In addition, it also helps the social worker to understand certain organization better as he/she reads and analyzes the introductory document explaining the functioning of that particular organization. This especially helps during the assessment as the social worker has a framework from which to assess the productivity or effectiveness of an organization, and also suggest areas of improvement. In the formulation of policies and agreements, a social worker who has mastered reading comprehension can offer consultancy for organizations or institutions as they formulate agreements as she well understands which words should be used within different parts of the document so as to pass a certain message in the correct manner. Similarly she can offer consultancy for new organizations as they develop introductory documents as she informs them of the grammar to be used in the document so as to bring out

a certain message. This ensures that these organizations present the relevant information that they want put forward.

Coordinating

Coordinating is a skill that is of value to a social worker. As she assesses the organizations for work productivity he/she can adjust certain actions to work with others so as to optimize the overall productivity of the organization at large. In solving issues a client may have in a work environment, a social worker is able to modify some of the work ethics of the employee so that they can deliver their services effectively. In an administrative capacity of an organization, a social worker can change or fine-tune certain activities in one department with another so as to improve the overall functioning of the organization. (National Association of Social Workers, 2009) In terms of introducing a new policy to the community the social worker with this coordinating skill can work with and harmonize the different organizations and institutions or individuals and the services they provide so as to ensure that the policy or service been delivered to the community is effective. Some such activities may include organizing a medical camp or a food camp for community members.

In addition the social worker is also able to train and pass this skill to others so that they are also in a position to coordinate and organize certain events or meeting or policies or programs for the benefit of their organization one is working in or the community the organization is serving and meeting their needs. At times, two organizations desire to merge. A social worker with this coordinating skill will be in a position to aid the organizations mergers as the

two organizations modify their services to support each other, and also adopt each others' services in their overall service to the community.

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