

Research paper on principles of effective intervention

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Principles of effective intervention are a requisite set of principles used in the ‘ what works’ movement. They are implemented within the criminal justice system. The principles have come in handy in changing the ideology from ‘ nothing works’ to ‘ what works’ and in what set of circumstances. The following four principles of intervention are not only effective in reforming recidivists, but also cardinal in ameliorating the society at large. These principles include targeting criminogenic needs, assessing risks and needs, use of proven theoretical models and the use of cognitive behavior approach. This paper will dwell with the four principles interrogating whether their effectiveness in the criminal justice system.

The first principle of intervention targets criminogenic needs. An ideal program for intervention seeks to address factors that relate to offending. This is because they can be altered. These factors are referred to as criminogenic needs. They lead a person to develop criminal or deviant behavior. These factors are ingrained in anti-social values, attitudes and belief that many people hold. A person will attempt to justify the consequences of criminal behavior. For example, a criminal will justify stealing with the fact that he or she has been stealing for a long time. Another may justify assault by claiming that the victim deserved to be assaulted.

Moreover, a criminal will attempt to minimize the resulting effect or illustrate a denial of his or her responsibility with regard to the consequences. An offender will claim to have received punishment or deny the allegations in order to avoid responsibility. Furthermore, the offender may even become hostile. A significant factor of criminogenic needs is criminal thinking. These

are thoughts to outsmarting the requisite authorities and demonstrating confident that he or she will not get caught. It is also cardinal to identify the offender's association. Offenders often have anti-social associations. These associations lead them into making poor decisions that lead to criminal behavior. Identifying these factors enables what works movements address them according to the needs of each offender.

The second principle is carrying out assessments of the actuarial needs and risks. This entails a systematic system of offender risk screening and undergoing needs analyzing to pinpoint what needs to be addressed.

Offender assessment entails recording and use of objective data about these factors. Risk in this sense denotes the probability of the criminal to engage in future criminal activities. On the other hand, the need in this context refers to the cardinal factors that lead to deviant behavior. It is by illustrating these needs that a comprehensive package program can be designed for the purposes of treating the offenders. It is vital to consider the validity and the target population among other issues in selecting the assessment instrument. It is vital to assess these instruments because empirical research indicates that successful outcomes are derived from programs, which have been founded on rigorous and objective assessment. It is also critical because it enables the maximization of the available scarce resources.

Therefore, it is both objective and cost effective in ensuring prudent use of the limited resources. It also enables the determination of risk levels applicable to different offenders. For example, an offender with high risk will be need more than group treatment to improve.

The third principle of intervention regards the designing and execution of a

theoretical model that is already proven. It is critical that for a program to be successful and effective, it must evidence-based and result-oriented.

Criminal behavior theories that rely on evidence provide better results, and their implementation is systematic. Under this heading, the current theories that have been proven by empirical research include cognitive-behavior and social learning theories. Undesirable theories of crime lack the basic requisite of a comprehensive theory. They often suffer from deficiencies in discipline theory, treat of offenders as juveniles, lack creativity and have no feminine side. Moreover, treatment models that are ineffective are centered solemnly on client therapies, low risk offenders and labeling approaches. It is also ineffective to externalize blame by placing it on different people apart from the offenders. For example, a rape offender alleging that the victim provoked him into committing rape. It is also unhealthy, and ineffective to promote the ventilation of rage as it serves no purpose. Therefore, the principle of using proven theoretical models that are evidence-based is effective as it enables only what works to be implemented. It facilitates the use of cardinal measure to ensure that offenders are admitted to programs that will reform them and improve society at large.

The fourth principle is cognitive behavior approach. Empirical research demonstrates that good behavior is a result of habitual habits that have been developed over time by an individual. These programs provide offenders not only with an excellent opportunity to learn, but also an avenue to practice learned behavior from these classes. Offenders repeat these learned behavior patterns during such sessions in order to make in it their habit. For example, offenders who get motivated to commit crimes because

of substance abuse learn how to stop taking those drugs. Therefore, such a program seeks to make any interaction between the offenders and their mentors an opportunity to improve. This principle is extremely vital and effective as it encourages offenders to reform. The program has been tested and proved to be effective as it enables offenders learn pro-social skills that are requisite for reformation. It is advisable that the punishment administered to the offenders for failure to adjust to these pro-social skills should be minimal. It is also cardinal that the rewards given for practicing such behavior should be greater than the punishment. These are the basic elements of this principle in what works movement. Research has shown that focusing on emotional appeal and fear on drug addicts does not work. Shaming offenders, programs designed for self-help and other introspective programs like yoga are also ineffective. They should be substituted with what works programs that are effective and productive.

These are the four principles of intervention that this paper deems effective and efficient in transforming an offender into a good citizen. The paper appreciates the presence of other principles of intervention that have also been proposed. The principles of targeting criminogenic needs, assessing risks, using proven theoretical models and the application of cognitive behavior approaches when applied together provide the best results. They should not be applied in isolation but rather in a manner that their reinforce each other. These are the core pillars of what works movement in changing the ideology of organization especially the criminal justice system. These principles should be implemented together with similar programs to attain

the requisite systematic reform of ideology being propelled by criminologist and penologist of the 21st century.

References

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