

# Discrimination model of supervision



The discrimination model of supervision developed by Bernard & Goodyear, (1998) has three primary focus areas in training novice counselors these include use of intervention, what the supervisee is doing in the session that is observable, conceptualization or how the session work is being conducted and the level of understanding the supervisee has regarding client themes and application of specific counseling session interventions, and personalization, the supervisors own approach or method. This model embeds three essential supervisory roles, teacher, counselor and consultant in providing effective supervision.

The teacher's primary role is to provide the supervisee with instruction in learning techniques and direction to ensure supervisee development in clinical work while also recognizing that client wellbeing is paramount in sessions. The counselor role is to assist the supervisee in identifying personal needs, developing self awareness and addressing performance anxiety which potentially interferes with good practice, and as a consultant who engages the supervisee in a collegial manner in identifying and considering different approaches in treatment planning.

As Michael's supervisor the teaching role is very important in developing skills, expanding knowledge in client engagement and the process of conducting a therapy session. Increasing the available interventions, provide interpretations for counseling-client interactions, and having the supervisor model interventions and techniques explaining the reasoning behind each approach (Stenack & Dye, 1982).

Michael would practice these skills in supervision and receive immediate feedback from his supervisor while exploring strategies and techniques to match the client's presenting issues and problems. In the case example, Michael does share he is insecure of his abilities and often doesn't know what to do, incorporating feedback from his supervisor, a strength and build upon this by being active will reduce his performance anxiety allowing him to focus on the applying of skills providing treatment services.

Another approach to use in the teacher role would to initiate videotaping some sessions. Reviewing his audiotape seems to elicit increased anxiety, by moving to videotaping a session the supervisor could actually observe Michael in the counseling session and could reinforce skills used with the client, build upon strengths and identify challenges to receive additional training in. Using videotape allows for the review of nonverbal communication, client incongruence, or lack of synchrony between the client and the supervisee to be recognized (Erford, 2010).

This supervision provides increased focus for Michael to receive feedback on his approach while allowing review systematically the delivery of services. Using the counselor role in supervision will provide an opportunity to increase his competencies while also recognizing that Michael is at the beginning of his clinical internship experience and his academic lens must now evolve into practical theoretical applications and developing competencies.

Assuring him will also be important to reduce his verbalized insecurity, by exploring his affective insecurity and any defensive reactions, which may

interfere in his self awareness and growth as a counseling professional( Stenack & Dye, 1982). It is also important in this case to learn more about Michaels own personal and cultural experiences and how these may involve both transference and counter transference with his clients.

The role of consultant in supervision would provide focus on the client problems in discussion with Michael, consider client motivations and suggest alternative case conceptualizations or interventions. Consultants do not provide specific instructions or answers instead they engage the supervisee in dialogue to consider choice and possible treatment options with the supervisee. In closing, it is essential for the counseling profession to provide high quality and effective supervision to novice counselors.

The counselor will be learning and deepening knowledge in therapeutic skills, strategies and approaches for growth in competencies for an extended period of time during an internship. Ensuring client wellbeing is of most importance in being provided services and there is the vicarious liability that a supervisor assumes when providing supervision to counselors, especially interns. Supervisors also have a responsibility to safeguard the profession by evaluating and monitoring closely a novice counselor on providing ethical standards of practice.