

# [Introductory communications for helping professions assignment](https://assignbuster.com/introductory-communications-for-helping-professions-assignment/)

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Introduction Perhaps the most significant phase of an effective professional helper is the self- evaluation. As a student taking a Communications class at the Medicine Hat College, I am being challenged to recognize and consider the concepts and skills used in an interview about a career choice. The fifteen minute interview included factors relating to the gathering of information about why another student, who was assigned by the instructor, has chosen her career choice (Mangos, 2007). The purpose of this paper is to apply my understanding of the concepts and skills learned in our lab to achieve the best outcome for the interview.

I will complete the interview assignment by discussing the general aspects of an interview, self- reflection and self-critique. General Aspects of an Interview In discussing the aspects of an interview, the opening plan was to meet, introduce myself and build a working relationship by asking the interviewee questions about herself, her family and her career choice. At the same time I was conscious in trying to make her feel comfortable. I remembered to specifically tell her that the information she shared would be confidential. Knowing that helped to create a safer environment for open communication.

Moving forward with an open ended question “ do want to tell me a little bit about yourself” gave her an opportunity to share as much or as little as she wanted to. I used a clarifying question at the beginning when the interviewee said, I am the baby, and my response was “ baby ay? That means you were spoiled a lot? ” Another clarifying question was asking about whether the grandparents living in the city are on mom’s side or dad’s side? The purpose of using the clarifying questions was to identify the blind spots around understanding family members; in this case it could be used as empathy.

In this circumstance I did to use clarifying questions to solve a problem (Egan, 1998). As well I clarified if any of “ her social work classes transferred over to Child and Youth Care diploma? ” Moving forward, the center focus was about family using some open-ended questions to allow for elaboration. For example, “ how has the transition been going now that you are away from your parents? ” The open ended question helped the interviewee to fill in things that are being left out of her experience and her story (Egan, 1998).

I continued to probe by asking more personal questions about relationships with family, friends and teachers. The probe was to assist her in telling her story and engage in the conversation (Egan, 1998). I used some closed ended questions such as “ are your parents supportive of your education? ” I think this closed ended question was impact as it would immediately attain internal understanding (Egan, 1998). I went on to focus on the career choice with an open ended question, Introductory Communications for Helping Professions By diamagnetic question by asking “ do you have a diploma? In the discussion about the interviewee having to move away from her parents’ home, I used a paraphrase by saying “ you are to at each other’s’ throats then? ” I used a focus question when I asked her “ why did you pick this career? ” She replied, “ l am more creative and my sister and brother have all the brains. My focus/humor/probe statement was “ that explains why your sister is going to be a pharmacist? ” I did some empathy aspects in responding to her comment about her grandparents cook home cooked meals for her, I responded “ less cooking for you that must be nice? By being empathic I was building on my understanding of the interviewee’s core message and to share that I understood her point of view’ (Egan, 1998). I was supportive in responses in several areas, one being “ Oh wow lucky’ in response to her telling me that electives transferred over to Child and Youth Care. Overall, I used a mix of open-ended questions, probing and interjections throughout the interview (Egan, 1998). Much more important than my verbal application is my awareness of my body and my voice as a source of communication (Egan, 1998).

As I concentrated on my non-verbal’s I kept close eye contact with the interviewee, wanting to insure I was present for her while engaging with her. As well I had an open stance with arms relaxed at times, while using a soft one in my voice. By having a smile on my face it allowed me to show that she could be comfortable with me and I was eager to learn about her family, friends, and educational choice. I was able to reflect into my inner peace at times, and this process helped to relax the interviewee. I was aware that my nonverbal behavior would enhance my working alliance with the interviewee (Egan, 1998).

While I realize that I should have summarized the main points of our session which would have brought the theme to a close. I prompted the interviewee to the closing statement “ l really enjoyed talking to you”. In closing my verbal and nonverbal behavior indicated my willingness to work with the interviewee. Over all I tried to be present psychologically, socially, and emotionally (Egan, 1998). Self-Reflection Self-reflection is important because it makes you aware of a situation like what I could have done better and supports me in finding better ways to complete an interview.

In this self-reflection opportunity, I will look at what I learned about my communication style and abilities, what I would do differently and what I was comfortable and uncomfortable with doing. Communication style can be the most important asset as a professional helper. In my communication style I was hoping to understand who the interviewee is as a person, with no Judgment or expectations of her points of view. When interacting with the interviewee, my tendency was to be candid, trusting and optimist to maintain a positive tone throughout the interview.

I learned that during the interview even though we were having an interpersonal conversation by responding appropriately to the other person, I was still communicating interpersonally by accessing my own feelings (Whiten &McCann, 2013). I was having a dyadic conversation; however, I was still communicating with yeses, when the interviewee would answer a question I had asked, I would think about what she had Just told me and talk to myself about my understanding of her thought/motivations and how it made me feel, making it interpersonal(Whiten &McCann, 2013). In considering what I would do differently?

I would try to be more interview (Comer, 1998). I should have taken more time to set the interview up with an outline and practiced before interviewing her, as I felt unprepared in how I wanted to ask the questions and in what sequence I should ask them. Having practiced beforehand would have given me the awareness of being less focused on elates and focused more on the suggested statements about her career choice of Child and Youth Care. I could have had her elaborate more on how she wants to help the children and what that means and looks like to her in this career.

By asking more probing questions I could have brought her to an internal awareness of what this position would look like to assist in future planning. I also would not wear my glasses but rather contacts next time as all I wanted to do was push my glasses back onto my face. My internal focus was on pushing my glasses back up when it should have been on what she was telling me. In addition, I would cross my arms less in the next interview I do, as it makes my posture closed rather than open. An open posture has a more inviting aspect and makes the interviewer look more engaging.

If I would have had a better open posture rather than a closed I may have been able to make the interviewee feel more at ease. When taking into consideration what I was comfortable and uncomfortable doing? I felt very uncomfortable because I was interviewing someone I had never met before the interview. I was uncomfortable because not only did I have to interview her for the purpose of completing an assignment but I also had to get to know her and ask personal questions. Asking personal questions felt like I was crossing her personal boundaries.

Interviewing would be a lot less awkward feeling had I known the person I was interviewing because you already have some sort of a relationship with someone you know. Basically, I don’t really like the role playing aspect of interviews as they are not for real. It causes me stress and makes me nervous when sharing with someone you just met your life’s story, family, personal experiences, and career due to a trust issue, and possibly being Judged. This may have been easier had it not be a dyad but ether a small group communication assignment, where it would be less one on one. I found it a lot easier to be the sender rather than the receiver.

Overall, self- reflection has allowed me to gain clarity on my introspection of how this interview process made me feel and how it was accomplished. Self-critique I believe that self-critique can be detrimental to understanding how to improve my skills for interviewing. I liked unstructured format to interview as one can see I used simple open-ended questions such as “ tell me about yourself. ” The unstructured format allowed me to follow her lead as I could anticipate what was coming up for ere beforehand (Comer, 1998). My opening included relationship building by attending, listening, understanding, empathy and probing.

I think my effective attending helped me to listen carefully and I was able to be present for her (Egan, 1998). In this format open ended questions allowed me to focus on the important views of the interviewee. While I feel I used good open ended questions I could have allowed her to elaborate more if I would have asked her questions like “ tell me more about your career” or “ how was that for you” when discussing her family (Bradley & Edinburgh, 1990). In contrast, closed ended questions brought me to do more of the work as I needed to constantly think of another question. However, close ended really want” (Egan, 1998)?

The closed ended question limited the information without further probing. To gain a better understanding, I could have obtained more information about why she wanted to help people, how did she come to that decision other than her sharing that it was not about money. I could have asked so what is it about your life that brings you to wanting to help others? This may have led to clearer understanding of what she was worried about in choosing this career path. I as able to hear what she was most excited about, which was working with children and youth in a school setting and her practicum at Interiors.

Much of my questions focused on family rather than gathering more information to hear about a time that she experienced being with a professional that guided her to this career choice and why she choose this career path. I feel that I was very empathic, warm, and supportive and created a comfortable environment to allow for open communication (Comer, 1998). There was a time or two when I moved on too quickly rather than fully listening. At these times I could have paused a little longer, more lenience to hear any added responses.

I did not summarize at the end the overall messages that I heard from her. This is where I should have recapped the information that received from her about herself, her family and her career. My closing was short and immediate. In my nonverbal communication I would have liked to be more conscious about my open stance by leaning forward and not crossed my arms at times. I gave a nonverbal cue of nervousness by silence and looking at the clock before closing. I did sit squarely, facing her with direct eye contact, open posture for the most part and somewhat relaxed.

I was able to observe the interviewee’s nonverbal messages as well; her facial expressions, movement, tone of voice and her being at ease (Egan, 1998). In watching the tape interview on my CD I noticed that I showed signs of nervousness, perhaps created by not knowing what my next question should be. Perhaps if I would have studied the questions and had a more structured interview I would have stay on track more so (Comer, 1998). Perhaps my nervousness took away from my person-centered listening as I was trying to focus on her key messages while moving on to my next question (Egan, 1998).

Conclusion In pondering the overall process, one of the keys to successful interviewing is having an understanding of what I have and have not learned in the way of concepts and skills needed for an interview. Reflecting on the topics of general aspects of an interview, self-reflection and self-critique, I was challenged to have internal insight on how I can improve my interview process. The first thing that comes to mind is the importance of recording my own thought responses immediately after and varying my communication skills according to the helping profession chosen and the needs f the interviewee ( Sigh & Brent).