



Motivational Interviewing During Brief Phone Calls

Overall Phone Tips

- 1. Be aware:** Phone conversations are different from face to face conversations - lack of control over physical environment; lack of body cues, facial expressions; silence may be more uncomfortable; no physical demonstration, visual aids.
- 2. Connection:** Make sure you have a good phone connection and technology is working appropriately.
- 3. Expectations:** Set your expectations and intentions before the call. Be transparent with clients about these.
- 4. Client Voice:** Listen more, speak less. Evoke client voice early and often.
- 5. Narration:** If you are typing, describe to the client what you are doing. If you are taking notes or doing other tasks while on the phone, fill the client in on this too.
- 6. Be Flexible:** Have a flexible agenda and be willing to adjust to meet the client. Become comfortable moving in and out of assessment mode; don't let the assessment dominate the interview.
- 7. Foster Motivation and Strengths:** Focus on client motivation and strengths frequently during the conversation. Remember to evoke motivation and change talk from the client as often as possible.
- 8. Specific and Colorful:** Be very specific about any instruction, recommendation. When possible use tangible, visual aids and examples.
- 9. Interviewer Preparation:** Prepare by minimizing distractions. Put your phone and other notifications on silent, turn off email and other technological distractions, set up your environment to promote focus on the call. Before the call take a moment to center yourself, set your intention and smile.
- 10. Client Distractions:** Help clients identify and minimize distractions (when possible) such as TV, radio, noisy environments, etc. If the connection is bad, address that issue.

