

HOW-TO GUIDE:

HOW TO USE MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Is this really what you want to be doing?

If you aren't truly committed to your goal, you probably won't achieve it. **Motivational Interviewing (MI)** is a great tool to work with people to ascertain how committed they are to their stated goal and identify any internal resistance or confusion that might get in the way. Using MI you can help people reveal their real motivations and values.

MI was developed in substance-misuse counselling and works with a person to help them better understand any ambivalence that prevents them from realizing their goals. Your role in MI is to help them understand what is happening in their head, not direct or encourage what they should be doing. It's a way of building motivation and improving readiness for change. MI also helps you understand where a person is in terms of the Stages of Change (*Prochaska*).

Stages of Change

Changing behaviour is a complex process and rarely linear. Prochaska & DiClemente (1994) defined the **Motivational Cycle of Change** in depiction of the ways that people move toward (or don't) successfully maintaining change. The 6 stages incrementally capture increasing levels of motivation, with the final Action and Maintenance stages representing a firm commitment to change. People can move backward and forward between the stages, and relapse is recognised as a very common and natural opportunity for growth and learning. The following table suggests responses to young people in the different stages.

STAGE	STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS	YOUR GOAL
PRE-CONTEMPLATION	No intention to change behaviour. Unaware or under-aware of problems	To encourage the student to consider they have a barrier/concern.
CONTEMPLATION	Aware of the problem & seriously considering a change, but no commitment or uncertainty on how to take action.	To raise awareness of the problem through reflection and the observation of behaviour.
PREPARATION	The young person intends to change and makes small behavioural changes.	To encourage these steps and support the change process.
ACTION	The young person decides to take decisive action to change.	To make action suggestions, reinforce changes, provide support and guidance.
MAINTENANCE	Work to prevent relapse and consolidate gains.	To support continued change and help with relapse prevention

Source: Prochaska & DiClemente (1994)

Conducting Motivational Interviewing (MI)

Change is challenging for all people, particularly so without the strong foundations of secure attachment and a sense of self-efficacy. Some students spend the years at school in a contemplative stage before starting to engage in the process of growth and learning. MI can be used to support transition to levels of greater motivation. When conducting MI Rollnick (1991) suggests the endeavour is guided by the following 5 principles:



MI fosters higher levels of self-efficacy in people. To keep the conversation honest and effective, try to avoid the following:

1	Ordering or directing.	7	Interpreting or analysing. Interpretive statements might imply that you know best and breaks the emotional flow.
2	Giving advice, making suggestions, or providing solutions prematurely or when unsolicited. These often begin with phrases such as, "What I would do is..."	8	Reassuring, sympathizing, or consoling. Again, this can break the honest flow of information.
3	Persuading with logic, arguing, or lecturing.	9	Intensive questioning or probing. Intensive questioning can interfere with the spontaneous flow of communication and divert it in directions of your interest.
4	Judging, warning or blaming.	10	Withdrawing, distracting or changing the subject.
5	Agreeing, approving, or praising. This can break the flow.		
6	Shaming, ridiculing or name-calling.		

Steps in Motivational Interviewing

1. Based on a strong rapport, ask questions about the benefits and costs of making the change we are talking about? Suggest exploring this together.
2. Draw up a grid and write the student's stated goal or suggested change down at the top. For example: To be at school on time each day.

Goal/change:

BENEFITS OF <u>STAYING THE SAME</u>	BENEFITS OF <u>ACHIEVING THE GOAL/ MAKING CHANGE</u>
COSTS OF <u>STAYING THE SAME</u>	COSTS OF <u>ACHIEVING THE GOAL/ MAKING CHANGE</u>

3. Work through each quadrant from left to right starting at the top. Ask open-ended questions and use reflective listening to identify the perceived benefits and costs.
 4. Write down simple notes in the young person's language. Look for emotionally charged responses and be careful to write them down without leading or judging the responses. For example, some possible benefits for being at school on time might be not getting into trouble, seeing my friends before school, but some costs might be not being able to sleep in, being tired in class because I have to babysit my siblings at night until mum gets home from work, rushing when walking to school is my only downtime in a day etc.
 5. Provide summaries at the end of each quadrant and an overall summary of the pros and cons (ambivalence) of realizing change and achieving the stated goal.
 6. Very often counter-intentions appear that challenge the goals and reveal a smaller step that is 'on the way to' the goal that is more meaningful and more likely to be achieved.
 7. For example, the bigger goal of being on time to school each day might be broken down to being on time on Thursdays when mum is home and always being at school by 9:30 every other day after dropping my siblings off.
 8. The following question is a nice recognition of the young person's current position: Try to guess how much of you (in a percentage) is truly committed to your goal: ____ %.

If it is less than 30%, try setting a new or smaller goal. The new goal might address a concern or fear that you have or be the next step in that direction.
- MI might be a step in a longer process of change, with each session indicating a higher % of commitment (greater intrinsic motivation) to wanting to create change.