ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS:
A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO THE INITIAL
FIELD PLACEMENT IN SOCIAL WORK

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ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS:

A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO THE

INITIAL FIELD PLACEMENT IN SOCIAL WORK


BY

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A Project Report submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Social Work


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Abstract

Enhancing Interviewing Skills

by Bonita A. Tucker

In this project an attempt was made to operationalize the
concepts involved in interviewing behaviors and teach them to
student social workers in a systematic manner. The teaching
strategy consisted of an integrated approach, involving components
of both the didactic and the experiential teaching models.
Throughout the project there was considerable emphasis placed on
the acquisition of individual skills and the practical application
of these skills in simulated interviews. Audio tape recordings
were made of the students' interviews and these were utilized for
feedback and evaluation.

The project employed a single-subject, multiple baseline
design. Thus baseline measurements were conducted simultaneously on
each of three different interviewing skill groups, while the
teaching strategy or intervention was sequentially applied to each of
the groups consecutively. Evaluation was in terms of scores on a
rating scale devised for the project. Measurements were taken pre-
intervention, during intervention and post-intervention.

The results of the project were generally very encouraging
and the findings clearly demonstrate the efficacy of the teaching
strategy. In each case scores underwent a positive escalation
following the onset of intervention and this trend continued into
the follow-up phases.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Frank Johnson for his helpful supervision and ongoing encouragement during the conception, application and writing of this project report.

Also for their tremendous cooperation, I express sincere thanks to my colleagues, Maureen Browne, Pat Browne, Mary Jardine, Denise Lawlor, Marilyn McCormack and Becky Roome.

Special warm appreciation is extended to my sister, Sharon White, who typed the final draft of this report.

Finally, I extend a well deserved note of thanks and appreciation to my husband, John, for his constant encouragement and understanding.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The traditional approach to teaching interviewing skills in field practice has been indirect. The student is taught in the classroom theoretically what is involved in an interview and it is hoped that in the field he will be able to integrate these concepts in his practice. Learning objectives are seldom explicitly stated and even less explicitly evaluated.

The student in the field is assigned clients and his own self-report, for the most part, constitutes the sole data upon which learning within the supervisory process is assessed. A major shortcoming of such an approach is that students may consciously or unconsciously tend to distort what actually occured. A study by Blocksma and Porter (1947) demonstrated that there was little relationship between what the students reported they would do and what they actually did do in an interview. This approach also makes the assumption that the student is sufficiently aware of the processes involved to record his interview accurately and insightfully. This is sometimes an incorrect assumption in view of his lack of self-evaluative skills and inexperience. There is also a question of student resistance to the supervisory process itself. This topic has received much attention in the field supervision literature. One major consequence of this resistance is a reluctance on the part of the student to specify learning difficulties because it might negatively affect 'field practicum' grades. Thus the student might tend to word his recordings

in order to demonstrate that he has been more facilitating in his client encounters than is, in fact the case. This may be done quite unconsciously on the part of the student, but still leaves the field instructor with an inaccurate assessment of the student's performance.

Finally, the emphasis in looking at student recordings is often on problem-solving processes and interventive strategies rather than on the basic skills involved in the process of interviewing. This is a necessary emphasis considering that the student is dealing with the 'real' problems of a 'real' client. It is felt that many learning opportunities for the student are neglected because of the necessary and seemingly unavoidable dichotomy between learning needs of the student and the responsibilities inherent in clinical practice. The result is often an inability on the part of the student to master the basic interviewing skills such as enabling the client to feel comfortable in the interviewing situation, facilitating self-exploration on the part of the client, and performing these activities in a systematic manner.

Traditionally social work supervision has had a strong experiential component and the student-supervisor relationship was seen primarily as a theraputic one for the student. Many aspects of this relationship were viewed as being analogous to the issues which arise between patient and therapist. Thus, a large proportion of the supervisory process involved helping the student to recognize and work through transference feelings towards the supervisor, and it was expected that a generalization of this experience to the student's own theraputic behavior with clients would occur. While there are certain similarities between theraputic and educational goals, the emphasis is different, and frequently the theraputic aspect of supervision was

practiced to the detriment of educational goals. This created role confusion and resulted in a lack of specificity and operationalization of the concepts involved in learning basic interviewing skills.

Partially as a reaction against this experiential orientation, social work educators have more recently utilized a highly cognitive, didactic approach in the teaching of skills (Hansen, Pound & Petro, 1976). The implicit paradox inherent in the sole use of the didactic methodology is that often the attitudes which the student is taught are in fact missing in the supervisor himself. The student, therefore, does not have a role model which he may imitate. Self-exploration, while overtly encouraged becomes a risky situation where the teaching atmosphere is not conducive to such. The student is caught in a bind between what the supervisor is telling him to do and what the supervisor himself does in the supervisory relationship.

Generally in field supervision processes there are insufficient attempts made to directly observe the student social worker's behavior with the client. More importantly behavioral objectives have not been stated explicitly. One can only conclude that any changes in therapeutic behavior are due to internal conceptual changes which have occurred somewhat mystically and incidently. The validity of current educational practices in social work are being questioned and the need for empirical justification is being increasingly recognized as a major issue in social work education (Hansen, Pound & Petro, 1976).

In the present study an attempt is made to develop a more systematic approach to supervision in at least one area of social work education: that of training in interviewing skills. The program is based on providing operational definitions of the activities involved

in interviewing, and teaching them individually rather than as a
'method' of interviewing. The skills which are emphasized are far from
all-inclusive but were chosen primarily because they represent the basic
skills to be mastered before further growth in interviewing and/or
problem-solving is possible. Hopefully by breaking down the interview
into its component parts, specific skills such as 'questioning' or
'reflection of feeling' are focused upon and learned by the students.
The task for the student is to learn one skill at a time and
gradually develop a repertoire. The focus on specific skills as
opposed to the totality of the interview allows one to approach the
interview more analytically and to develop a more comprehensive
understanding of one's own skills and limitations. Most importantly
it leads to the development of explicit learning objectives on an
individual basis.

Ideally, for maximum effectiveness, the supervisor would
directly observe interviewing sessions between the client and the student.
The value of using actual clients has its limitations, however, both
practical and ethical. There is an ethical question involved in
assigning a naive student to a client struggling with a problem, in that
the problem has to be focused upon sometimes to the exclusion of the
processes utilized in the interviewing behavior. In the present study
it was felt that simulations would provide the teaching opportunities,
while avoiding the ethical considerations in dealing with real clients.
By utilizing role-plays of client problem situations, the opportunity is
provided to test skills in a setting which is not so anxiety-provoking
for the student or the client before direct translation into operational
practice. Also, content and structure can be manipulated to produce the

desired practice situations. Thus the students have the opportunity to practice and demonstrate that they have learned the skill in question. In addition the teaching program utilizes model tapes which are as skill-specific as possible so that the students can look at their own performance in comparison to these models.

The traditional didactic strategy of teaching general principles and knowledge has little efficacy when used alone in the teaching of interviewing skills. Alternately the experiential model has grave limitations in terms of lack of specificity, of teaching and learning goals. The proposed teaching model for this project attempts to incorporate the three basic strategies involved in learning interviewing skills:

(1) There is a didactic component in that the individual skills are explicated by the instructor and information is provided on their definitions and utility.

(2) There is an experiential component involved in that the instructor models these skills in the supervisor-student relationship.

(3) There is a practical component involved in that part of the teaching expectations require the student to actually perform the activities being explicated and modeled. The students are involved in active participation.

In addition there is a strong emphasis on principles of learning theory such as reinforcement, specificity of learning goals, and quantitative assessment and evaluation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

.A review of the literature on teaching interviewing skills
indicates that there was very little written prior to the mid-1960's.
This reflects the lack of specificity generally in counseling education
and is attributed by Matarazzo, Wiens and Saslow (1966) to the view
that psychotherapy is a private interaction between therapist and
patient and therefore should be removed from public scrutiny.  The
supervisory processes with regard to training in such skills was
therefore seen in the same light.

Some of the more relevant studies done at this time in fact
question the validity of the counseling process itself.  Carkhuff and
his associates (Carkhuff, 1972, Carkhuff & Berenson, 1967) found
evidence indicating that many graduate students become less, not more
capable of helping because their educational programs were overly
cognitive and nonsystematic, run by educators who themselves lacked
basic helping skills.  The now classic study by Eysenck (1952)
suggested that people in need of social-emotional help are as likely to
be rehabilitated without psychotherapy as with it.  Carkhuff (1969)
found that counseling as practiced by his definition of a 'low-level'
helper not only has a neutral effect but in fact can serve to retard
the client in terms of his functioning.

The first major deviation from the traditional psychoanalytic
training format was that offered by Rogers (1957).  His emphasis on the
client-centered approach opened up the field to public scrutiny for what

occurs in psychotherapy, thereby paving the way for more systematic
training procedures for therapists. His training model encouraged
students to discriminate between facilitative and non-facilitative
behaviors by having them listen to tape recordings of experienced and
non-experienced therapists. This process not only allowed for more
systematic supervision, but recognized the acquiring of skills as a
vital part of supervision. The discrimination training provided,
however, was not as systematic as it might have been and individual
skills were not well-defined. Thus a student might be able to
discriminate between an effective and a non-effective interview but not
be able to identify or practice the specific behaviors involved.

The next major innovation in teaching interventive skills was
that proposed by Truax and Carkhuff (1967). Their program,
discriminated between the high level and the low level therapist based
on the levels of empathy, warmth and genuiness displayed by each. In
the first and second phases of the training program the students would
listen to audio tapes illustrating high and low levels of these three
ingredients and then rate the tapes on a seven or nine point scale.
The third phase of training entailed having the student undergo a group
therapy experience himself, thus incorporating an experiential
component in the training format where the student could apply the skills
learned in the previous two phases. In this respect it is similar to
Rogers' program in that it helped the students to deal with feelings and
conflicts elicited by the supervisory experience but it emphasized more
than Rogers' format the acquisition of specific, facilitative
interventive skills. The specific behaviors constituting the global
characteristics of empathy, warmth and genuiness, however, were not

explicitly defined. The assumption is that if the students learn to recognize these qualities, then they will be able to incorporate them into their own interventive behaviors. Overall Carkhuff's greatest contribution to the literature seems to be his emphasis on evaluating the results of counselor training programs, and his methodology which incorporated the didactic and the experiential approaches to supervision.

The training programs introduced by Phillips and Matarazzo (1962) and later by Matarazzo, Phillips, Wiens and Saslow (1965) can be construed as the first programs measuring actual student therapist behaviors. These programs utilized pre and post-training measurements under two supervisory conditions. The first depended on self-reports by the students to their supervisors and the second consisted of actual observation of the students in interviewing situations. Each session was followed by a discussion between the student and the supervisor, in which the supervisor made recommendations for specific behavioral changes. Results indicated that the students undergoing the latter approach increased their use of facilitating techniques, and were more active and influence oriented during their interviews than the students receiving the former supervision. These studies illustrated the possibility of isolating, defining and teaching concrete behaviors within the supervisory sessions. The training was not as behaviorally specific as desirable, though, and the instructional approach relied on delayed rather than immediate feedback.

Rervich and Geertsma (1969) attempted to compensate for these deficiencies by utilizing videotape demonstrations of desired behaviors and self-observation by videotaped feedback. Kagan and Krathwohl (1967) also advocate the use of videotape as a means of providing feedback in

assisting students to improve their skills. Kagan (1972, 1973 & 1975) has developed a training manual entitled Interpersonal Process Recall which systematically teaches students skills by having them observe themselves on videotape in interviewing situations and subsequently receiving point-by point feedback not only from the supervisor but also from the client.

The most comprehensive and systematic methodology reviewed for the teaching of interviewing skills is that proposed by Ivey (1971) and Ivey and Authier (1978). This methodology, also called 'microcounseling' by its authors, is based on the assumption that the complex skills required by an effective helper are best taught by breaking down the interview into its component parts and teaching each as a separate skill. The model incorporates the concepts of modeling, feedback, operant reinforcement, didactic learning and extensive practice. The teaching strategy for the project under consideration has utilized many of the principles of 'microcounseling' in its formulation.

In looking at the literature overall, several issues emerge which are considered to be relevant in the teaching of interviewing skills. Generally there is no clear-cut empirical evidence leading to a definitive answer as to which is the most effective methodology but in the formulation of the proposed teaching model the following issues were influential:

## Experiential versus Didactic Supervision

The experiential or "growth" orientation in supervision is characterized by an emphasis on experiential learning and a counseling-type of supervision. This methodology stresses the student's need to become aware of his own feelings and to work through personal blocks

to effective work with clients. Assessment of learning relies on the student's own self-report in the form of recordings of interviews. The difficulties inherent in the self-reporting method have already been pointed out in the 'Introduction' of this report. Evidence provided by Matarazzo (1971) among others, suggests that this case conference style of supervision has real limitations in producing change in student behaviors relating to interviewing. Kadushin (1974) and also Rosenblatt and Mayer (1975) have pointed out that there is little confirmation of the efficacy of this method when utilized as the sole method for teching interviewing skills.

The didactic approach to learning incorporates strategies such as (a) modeling, (b) feedback and reinforcement, (c) practice and rehearsal and (d) evaluation and assessment. Payne and Galinsky (1968) did a series of studies comparing didactic to experiential training and found generally that the didactic approach produced superior results in the trainees' ability to respond empathically. Many studies have been done on the efficacy of each of the components of the didactic method and a brief overview follows:

(a) Modeling and Instruction. Bandura (1969) asserts that modeling is one of the fundamental means by which new behaviors are acquired. Several other studies (eg. Cyphers, 1973, Stone and Vance, 1976) have shown that behavioral modeling of desired interview behaviors is by itself superior to the non-treatment condition. Furthermore, where modeling is paired with other strategies the combined condition produces even better results. Goldberg (1970) found that modeling plus instruction produced better results than modeling alone. He found that instructions tend to make the desired behavior highly discernible and also alert the learner in encouraging him to attend to

relevant material.

     (b) Reinforcement and Feedback. Conclusions drawn from feedback and reinforcement studies are somewhat ambiguous regarding the value of immediacy. Bandura (1969) found that modeling facilitates response acquisition while feedback and reinforcement are necessary for response maintenance. Reddy (1969) in his studies has produced some support for the superiority of immediacy of feedback as compared to delayed feedback.

     (c) Rehearsal and Practice. Rehearsal has received little attention in the literature. One study by Stone and Vance (1976) included rehearsal as a treatment condition when they studied the impact of instruction, modeling and rehearsal on learning empathic responding. Each component was studied alone and in all possible combinations. Rehearsal alone was found to be least effective in terms of facilitating learning, but a combination of all three was considered to be the most desirable.

     In assessing the foregoing studies it seems that for maximum effectiveness both the experiential and the didactic teaching models should be utilized. Use of the didactic methodology alone can produce mechanistic responses which would detract from the student's use of these techniques in an insightful and self-evaluative manner. Also, the importance of relationship ingredients like empathy, warmth and genuineness in the student-supervisor relationship is seen to be essential in producing a maximally effective learning environment. Most importantly, a combination of the two would provide the specificity in learning goals and the systematic instruction which is lacking in the experiential model.

## The Use of Media - Video versus Audio Techniques

Generally it would be agreed that videotape techniques are invaluable aids in counselor training. They provide a relatively non-obstrusive method whereby the supervisor can furnish immediate feedback without the disruptive effects of interrupting an interview "in vivo" and also provide a very effective method of self observation by the student. One study by Stone (1975) provides evidence for the superiority of videotape when compared to models provided by instructional manuals and audiotape. It is also generally agreed that videotape is more stimulating and can probably hold the student's attention for a longer period than audiotape. The use of videotape, however, has some practical limitations in terms of the greater expense involved and the lack of these facilities in most agencies. The question to be addressed is whether the use of audiotape, which has many of the advantages of videotape could not be deployed with greater facility in training programs. In fact a study by Yenawine and Arbuckle (1971) showed that early in the training period the use of audio rather than video media is optimal. Ward, Kagen and Krathwohl (1972) found no significant differences in counseling effectiveness among practicum students assigned to either a video interpersonal process recall group or a group using the audio media. In a review of research Hansen, Pound and Petro (1976, p. 112) found that these studies "revealed no significant differences between audio and video techniques."

## Rating Scales - Qualitative versus Quantitative Data

In any teaching strategy much depends on the efficacy of the measurement instrument chosen to evaluate the outcomes. In many

single-skill training programs rating scales are seen to be the most effective means of assessment.

The reliability of rating scales has given rise to several studies in the field. The issue arising in this area is whether qualitative rating scales can be applied in the same manner by different judges. How high is the inter-rater reliability? Also, how thoroughly does one have to instruct in constructs like 'empathy' to obtain inter-judge agreement as to the behaviors constituting that construct. One study done by Blaas and Heck (1975) of Truax's (1972) empathy rating scales pointed out that the differential ratings by different judges indicate that responses are being made to 'counseling style' rather than to the specific behaviors which may be facilitative or non-facilitative. Several researchers in this area have indicated that a significant portion of the source of differences between raters is attributable to inadequate or differential training creating a different awareness. It was found by Hill and King (1976) that when all judges were taught the same skills these differences disappeared and the more clearly operationalized the scale was the greater the interjudge reliability. To avoid such problems with rating scales direct behavioral counts have been utilized by researchers like Aldridge and Ivey (1975). Frequency counts have very real limitations, however, in that they do not provide any information on the appropriate nature of the response. Lea (1975) found that explicit instructions themselves increased the frequency of reflection of feeling responses but not the rated level of empathy. In studies focusing on improving eye contact, the dependent measure is breaks in eye contact and a perfect score using this criterion alone would be produced by a

constant stare - certainly not a desirable or effective interviewing technique.

An alternative is to use a combination of frequency counts and also ratings on qualitative dimensions. This procedure alleviates much of the criticism of frequency counts but again depends on the clarity and reliability of the scales. Gingerich (1979) states that the best measures are usually a simple frequency count or a proportion of occurrence during a specified time frame.

Formulating a comprehensive reliable rating scale for evaluation, is a problematical procedure. The most simple solution would be to utilize a scale which has already been standardized. However, as Gingerich (1979) points out these tests are usually not suitable for single-subject research. The normative approach utilized in such tests is the direct opposite of the idiographic focus of the study in single-subject designs. Standardized tests are also often inadequate because the range of abilities which they measure is too broad and they are not sufficiently sensitive to measure specific behaviors.

# CHAPTER III

## THE PRESENT STUDY

The project under consideration involves the breaking down of complex verbal and non-verbal interviewing behaviors into more easily specifiable units. The objective is to make the concepts of interviewing which are implicitly understood by most practioners into more explicit and measurable forms. This is assumed to promote the learning of these skills in several ways:

    (1)  It will provide a relatively safe training ground where the student may practice the skills.

    (2)  It will contribute to the student's professional self-confidence as he sees himself improving.

    (3)  It will provide an opportunity for immediate and skill-specific feedback.

    (4)  It will encourage generally a more analytical approach to learning.

The purpose of this study is to design and test a method of teaching interviewing skills which incorporates the important elements of the didactic training model with the experiential component.

The didactic portion of the program consists of the information sheets explicated by the supervisor and read by the student, as well as the references made to outside sources. These instructional sheets generally describe the skill and provide a rationale for its use. Copies of the sheets are provided in Appendix D. Both instructional material and the model audio tapes were developed to enable the student

to discriminate how and where the skill is actually used and also the appropriate levels of usage. The use of the audio media allows for the immediate feedback stressed by learning theorists for its positive effects on learning. It also allows for the division of the interview into smaller concrete units for the purposes of teaching without the disruptive effects inherent in continuous interruptions during actual interviewing sessions.

In addition to the didactic teaching methodology, the experiential component is also utilized. The supervisor demonstrates by his own example the use of these skills in teaching sessions and also emphasizes the relationship ingredients of empathy, warmth and genuineness in his relationship with the students. Thus, the teaching program is not simply a mechanical process of explication and instruction but is dependent to a certain extent on the manner in which it is conducted. This is similiar to and models in many ways the relationship skills expected of the student in his worker-client relationships.

## Identification of the Interviewing Skills

Studies by Zimmer and Cowles (1972) and Zimmer and Peppyne (1971) found that the global dimensions of empathy, warmth, and genuineness can be specified more precisely in terms of specific responses which are the components of these dimensions such as reflection of feelings, open-ended questions and attending behaviors. The skills chosen for inclusion in this program are similiar to those emphasized in teaching models proposed by Egan (1975), Brammer (1973), Ivey (1971) and Ivey and Authier (1978). A review of the literature in this respect reveals that most authors agree on the general types of skills

involved in interviewing and differences occur mainly in the individual classifications and specificity of behavioral components.

The present project involves the teaching of three groups of interviewing skills which are further subdivided into the following components:

## Skill Group 1 - Listening Skills

These involve responding to the client both verbally and non-verbally in a manner which communicates interest and involvement. These skills include:

(a) Attending behaviors such as eye contact, relaxed posture and verbal behavior relating to client disclosures.

(b) Perception-checking behaviors which involve verbal responses in the nature of verifying with the client, worker perceptions of what the client is saying and/or demonstrating by non-verbal indications.

## Skill Group 2 - Elaboration Skills

These behaviors are designed to provide a maximum of clarification of the client problem both for the worker and the client. Essential components of these skills are:

(a) Questioning in a manner which elicits maximum information from the client, typically referred to an open-ended questioning.

(b) Focusing behaviors which entail pinpointing the interaction on the relevant details of the client communication, also, partializing problem events into smaller, more workable units.

## Skill Group 3 - Responding Skills

These are defined as worker-initiated statements leading to the building of trust in the relationship and self-exploration on the part

of the client. These behaviors are further specified as:

(a) Reflection of feelings statements which are designed to enable the client to become aware of and accept his own, sometimes hidden feelings. In addition, demonstration of worker understanding relected in such statements encourages the building of trust in the relationship and in the worker's ability to help.

(b) Summarization statements which are seen to be essential for providing continuity within the interview and serve as a stimulus for further discussion and direction.

The foregoing classification is not meant to be an exhaustive or all-emcompassing one, rather it is deemed to include those skills which are considered by writers in the field (eg. Brammer, 1973, Ivey, 1971 & Egan, 1975) to be most basic to the formation of a trusting rapport with the client and to understanding his problem both as he sees it and more objectively. These are considered to be the primary skills to be mastered before any work is possible in the areas of problem-solving, decision-making, contracting or evaluation of outcomes.


## Hypotheses and Assumptions

The following assumptions form a necessary prerequisite to this project:

(1) It is possible to lessen the behavioral complexity of the interviewing process by focusing on single skills and formulating specific goals.

(2) This method provides important opportunities for self-observation on the part of the student. Immediacy of feedback is also provided by utilizing the audio tapes. At any point the tape can be

stopped and discussion of the point in question can ensue without
disrupting the process of the interview.

(3) The fact that the interviews are simulated have several
advantages in lessening the anxiety of the student thereby enabling
him to become increasingly open to the learning opportunities
provided. In addition, ethical considerations in terms of using
actual clients as 'guinea pigs' are avoided.

(4) Even though the problem situations are simulated or
role-played, the skills learned should be fairly readily
transferrable to 'real life' counseling situations.

(5) These kinds of skills are learned most effectively by a
combination of experiential and didactic teaching strategies rather
than by either strategy used in isolation. While cognitive materials
are provided in terms of explication and references, the major
emphasis within the program is on participation, practice and behavior.

(6) The methodology provides advantages for both the student
and the supervisor which may not be apparent in alternative teaching
situations. There is a demand for active involvement on the part of
the student and a consequent demand for explicit instruction on the
part of the supervisor.

If these assumptions are valid, it is reasonable to pose the
following hypotheses for the project;

1. Post-intervention scores of each individual involved in the
study will be significantly higher than baseline scores. Intervention
is here defined as the teaching strategy utilized in the project.

2.    The greatest initial gains in scores will coincide with the teaching strategy in each particular skill group.

3.    The use of this model has viable research possibilities in promoting understanding of the processes involved and further delination of the relationships between one skill and another.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

In this section a description of the experimental design, the subjects and the teaching strategy or intervention is presented. The procedures followed are explained and the rating method is described.

## Design

The design of the project is that of a single subject, time series type utilizing a multiple baseline approach. The reasons for the utilization of the single-subject design are as follows:

(1) Each student procedes from a different level in factors such as maturity, and ability to conceptualize, therefore, his learning needs are specific to him as an individual.

(2) By using each student as his own control any statistically significant result is more justifiably attributable to the intervention procedure rather than to external factors.

(3) The ongoing monitoring of interviewing skills is possible in a single-subject design and is not practical in a larger group. Thereby, immediate feedback concerning the progress of the teaching strategy is more readily available both to the supervisor and to the student.

(4) It promotes in each student a sense of responsibility and involvement in the project and encourages self-corrective behaviors.

(5) The project was developed primarily to reveal patterns of behavior change over time and this design avoids the problems

inherent in averaging over groups which tends to obscure such changes.

(6) The utilization of a control group design would have meant withholding the teaching strategy to a certain group of individuals, this was seen to be ethically unacceptable in the field practice situation.

The advantages gained by utilizing the multiple base line design are as follows:

(1) It would allow one to infer more explicitly the causal relationship between the intervention and changes in behavior reflected in the scores on the rating scales.

(2) Time limitations made this design more desirable than others in that intervention could procede with one group of skills while baseline measurements could be obtained on others. Thereby, information could be gathered concurrently on all three skill groups.

(3) It allows for the comparison of scores before, during and after intervention has occurred.

(4) Information is available regarding generalization effects or how the teaching intervention in one group of skills can effect performance in others.

The methodology employed involved the simultaneous measurement of baseline data on all three skill groups, while sequentially applying the teaching strategy to one group at a time at bi-weekly intervals. Table I depicts the sequential application of the teaching strategy for the duration of the project.

TABLE I

Multiple - Baseline Design Phases

| Skill Group | Baseline | Intervention | Follow-up |
|---|---|---|---|
| Listening Skills | Weeks 1-4 | Weeks 5-6 | Weeks 7-12 |
| Elaboration Skills | Weeks 1-6 | Weeks 7-8 | Weeks 9-12 |
| Responding Skills | Weeks 1-8 | Weeks 9-10 | Weeks 11-12 |

Teaching Strategy

The teaching strategy consisted of the same steps for each skill group and proceeded as follows:

(1) An initial explication of the skill. This presentation generally: (a) introduced a definition of the skill, (b) identified the behaviors which constitute the skill, (c) provided a rationale for use of the skill, and (d) presented guidelines and instruction for its use and some practice examples. Instruction sheets were given to the students for future reference containing the above information. These sheets are presented in Appendix B.

(2) An audio tape was presented which illustrated effective use of the skill in practice. Discussion followed and outside references were suggested.

(3) Each student then performed a role play of an interview in which he played the part of a social worker.

(4) At the next session a replay is presented of the student's previously recorded role-play. These tapes had been previously rated by the supervisor and feedback and reinforcement was provided at this time, with the emphasis on positive reinforcement of desired behaviors and suggestions for possible changes in responses. In this session the emphasis was only on the particular skill in question.

(5) Each student then performs another role-play of an interview dealing with a different situation.

(6) Each tape is subsequently rated by the supervisor and at the next session feedback and reinforcement are provided to the student on his performance.

Each of these steps was replicated during the two weeks (or four teaching sessions) assigned for explication of each skill group. Once the teaching strategy had been implemented the student was left to work on that particular skill group on his own and as few references as possible were made to it in subsequent teaching sessions. This was seen to be necessary in view of the attempt to make the sessions as skill-specific as possible.

## Role-Play Situations

Wherever possible these situations were drawn from the student's own cases. Others, however, were drawn from a wide range of client

problem situations. The situations were varied so that all possible
types of client contacts could be included from initial interviews
through continuing treatment to terminal interviews, so that students
could experience each. There was an emphasis on problem situations
involving alcoholism, since all four students were involved in
agencies providing primary services to alcoholics.

The situations to be role-played were chosen by the supervisor
and a brief synopsis was provided for the student to read over and
rehearse fifteen minutes before he performed the actual role-play.
These synopses are presented in Appendix A. The teaching time
alloted for each of the three skill groups was eight hours. These
were sub-divided into four two-hour sessions extending over a two-week
period.

## Measurement Strategy

Evaluation was in terms of the student's ability to demonstrate
the different skills during role-plays of approximately fifteen to
twenty minutes duration. Each of the two students in each agency
performed first as the 'social worker' and then as the 'client'. The
order of who would play the part of the 'social worker' first was
consistently varied to control for differential effects in scores
arising from this methodology.

Measurement of abilities was in terms of scores on a rating
scale devised by the supervisor for each separate skill within each
skill group. These rating scales are presented in Appendix C. The
rating scale took the form of a statement made in relation to a

desired behavior assumed to be a constituent of each particular skill.
Ratings were on a scale from one to five. A rating of 'one' indicated
that the student exhibited no perceivable ability to demonstrate the
skill, while a rating of 'five' indicated that the student exhibited
an extremely high degree of competence and consistency in
demonstrating the relevant skill. An explanation of all numerical
ratings is presented in Appendix D. Since there was also an emphasis
on non-verbal behaviors in the project, ratings relating to these
behaviors were directly recorded by the supervisor at the time of the
actual role-play.

## Teaching Instruments

Generally, the instructional sheets, the model tapes, the
students' own tapes and the supervisor served as the core teaching
instruments for the project.

## Subjects

The subjects for this project were four undergraduate social
work students. These students were in the process of completing their
fourth-year field practicum requirement, and teaching sessions took
place in the agency settings. The students were assigned to the
agencies for a period of two days each week for a thrirteen-week
duration which constituted the Winter semester of 1980. There were two
students in each of two agencies. Teaching strategy was implemented in
a triad consisting, in each agency, of the two students and the supervisor.
Student motivation was generally of a very high calibre since the
opportunities in these agencies were relatively few for ongoing

one-to-one interviewing practice with actual clients. In one agency contacts were of an extremely short-term duration, and in the other, the students were principally engaged in the area of community education and development utilizing relatively large groups of clients. The students saw the project as comprising a very large part of their preparation for fifth-year field practice and eventual work in the field. It was explained to the students that this project was to be used as a thesis project for the supervisor and they gave written permission for its use for this purpose.

# CHAPTER V

## FINDINGS

The major purpose of the present study was to assess the effectiveness of the teaching strategy as reflected in the scores of each of the subjects. In this chapter the results of the project are examined and explanations for outcomes are considered. Evidence will be provided of the lack of autocorrelation of the scores, positive impact of the teaching strategy and significance of the findings. In addition to the overall observations of results which will be provided here, a breakdown of each individual student's results is presented. This seemed desirable in view of the fact that the project utilized the single-subject design and there are individual differences in results which warrant attention.

The mean scores obtained during baseline, intervention (teaching) and follow-up phases have been computed for each student and are illustrated in Tables 2 to 4 (p.29). As is apparent from these tables the scores underwent a positive escalation within each skill group for each student involved in the project. As pointed out in the previous chapter (p. 22) observations were conducted concurrently but intervention was introduced sequentially for each skill group. Therefore, the number of weeks for each baseline phase varied with each skill group. The mean scores were combined and averaged for all four students and are shown in the last column of the tables. Thus the relative changes in scores for each skill group can be compared across all four students and the overall

### TABLE 2
#### Listening Skills - Mean Scores

| Sessions | Phases | Student #1 | Student #2 | Student #3 | Student #4 | Combined |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-4 | Baseline | 18.25 | 17.25 | 25.5 | 16.25 | 19.31 |
| 5-6 | Intervention | 31 | 30 | 33 | 27.5 | 30.38 |
| 7-8 | Follow-up | 35.5 | 29.5 | 34 | 31.5 | 32.63 |
| 9-10 | Follow-up | 36 | 33.5 | 34.5 | 32 | 34 |
| 11-12 | Follow-up | 37.5 | 33.5 | 36.5 | 34 | 35.38 |

### TABLE 3
#### Elaboration Skills - Mean Scores

| Sessions | Phases | Student #1 | Student #2 | Student #3 | Student #4 | Combined |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-6 | Baseline | 19.83 | 17.5 | 24.17 | 17.67 | 19.79 |
| 7-8 | Intervention | 37.5 | 30 | 36 | 31 | 33.63 |
| 9-10 | Follow-up | 37.5 | 33.5 | 33 | 31 | 33.75 |
| 11-12 | Follow-up | 40 | 33.5 | 36 | 33.5 | 35.75 |

### TABLE 4
#### Responding Skills - Mean Scores

| Sessions | Phases | Student #1 | Student #2 | Student #3 | Student #4 | Combined |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-8 | Baseline | 20.63 | 17.25 | 23.88 | 18.75 | 20.12 |
| 9-10 | Intervention | 38 | 34 | 33 | 31 | 34 |
| 11-12 | Follow-up | 37.5 | 33.5 | 35.5 | 34 | 35.13 |

effectiveness of the program can be more clearly demonstrated. As can be seen from viewing the tables the differences in scores between baseline and post-interventive phases are relatively consistent and demonstrate an overall escalation in scores of approximately 16 points. Skill group 3 (Responding) showed a slightly lesser increase in scores than the other two groups.

Tests of autocorrelation were performed on all the data in accordance with Gottman and Lieblum's (1974) caution that all statistical procedures utilizing the single-subject design should be preceded by tests for autocorrelation. It is considered that if the data are found to be autocorrelated then they are not amenable to any further statistical procedures. Results demonstrated that the data in this project were not autocorrelated. Table 5 depicts the autocorrelation coefficient (r) for each skill group in relation to each subject in the project. Scores are considered to be uncorrelated if $2/\sqrt{n}$ is greater than r in each case. As is evident from the table $2/\sqrt{n}$ varies with each skill group but is consistent for each student since the number of observations was the same. For further explanation of the autocorrelation procedure the reader is referred to Jayartne (1978).

## TABLE 5

### Autocorrelation Coefficients

| Skill Group | Student | X̄ During Baseline | r Score | $2/\sqrt{n}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Listening Skills | 1 | 18.25 | .53 | 1.41 |
| | 2 | 17.25 | .67 | 1.41 |
| | 3 | 25.50 | .57 | 1.41 |
| | 4 | 16.25 | .42 | 1.41 |
| Elaboration Skills | 1 | 19.83 | .35 | .82 |
| | 2 | 17.50 | .59 | .82 |
| | 3 | 24.17 | .53 | .82 |
| | 4 | 17.67 | .41 | .82 |
| Responding Skills | 1 | 20.63 | .61 | .70 |
| | 2 | 17.25 | .60 | .70 |
| | 3 | 23.88 | .53 | .70 |
| | 4 | 18.75 | .31 | .70 |

NOTE: n equals 4 for Listening Skills group.

n equals 6 for Elaboration Skills group.

n equals 8 for Responding Skills group.

The two-standard deviation procedure (Jayaratne, 1978) was performed on all data in order to establish the statistical significance of the results. This procedure provides evidence of significance if it is determined that there are two or more successive scores during the intervention phase which are two-standard deviations from the means during baseline. The issue of whether this is a "true" statistical procedure was seen as being secondary to the 'clinical' significance of establishing that the teaching strategy had indeed produced a significant positive effect on the behaviors involved which were reflected in the scores. The criterion for success in this project was a positive change in interviewing behaviors and there was no specification made at the outset as to how much improvement, in quantitative terms, was necessary in order to prove effectiveness of the interventive strategy. The two-standard deviation procedure seemed adequate for this purpose. The methodology is based on the assumption that each student is unique in his motivation and capabilities and, therefore, each will benefit differently from the program.

Results have been graphed for each student and are presented in Figures 1 to 4 (pp. 33-36). The graphs depict the scores obtained by each student during each of the three phases; baseline, intervention and follow-up. In each case the maximum score obtainable was 50 points. As can be seen there is a positive escalation in scores for each student. The horizontal lines represent the numerical value of two standard deviations from the mean in each case. For each student there are four or more observations located outside these bands of significance and this situation is considered (Jayartne, 1978) to be

Figure 1. Scores for Student 1 on three skill groups.

Note. The horizontal lines on each graph represent 2 standard deviations from the mean.

Figure 2. Scores for Student 2 on three skill groups.

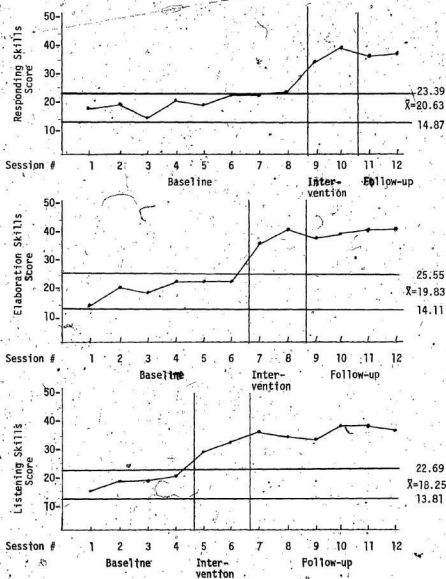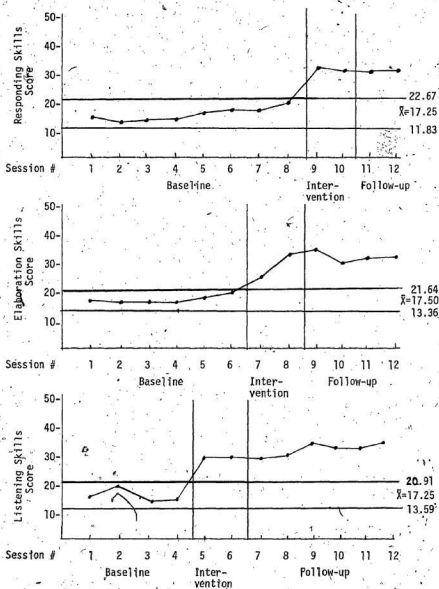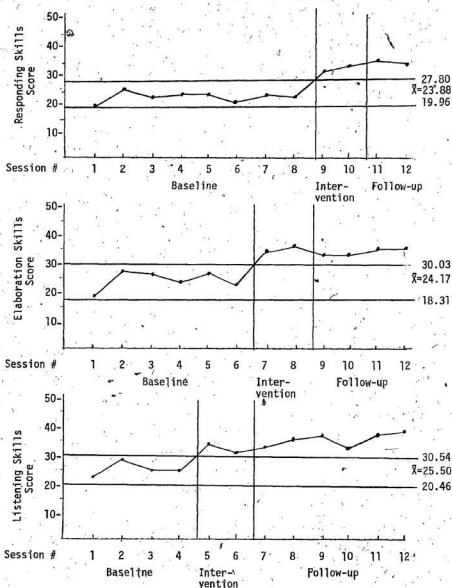Note. The horizontal lines on each graph represent 2 standard deviations from the mean.

Figure 3. Scores for Student 3 on three skill groups.

Note. The horizontal lines on each graph represent 2 standard deviations from the mean.
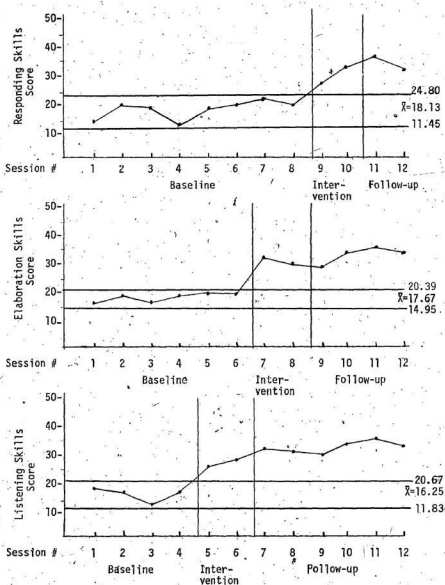
Figure 4. Scores for Student 4 on three skill groups.

Note: The horizontal lines on each graph represent 2 standard deviations from the mean.

adequate to establish the statistical significance of the scores, hence, the effectiveness of the teaching strategy. The means have also been indicated for each graph and are shown in the extreme right-hand margin for each.

In Figure 1 which illustrates the scores for Student 1, intervention in each of the skill groups can be seen to have produced an escalation in scores. The mean score increased by 19.25 points in the Listening Skills, 17.67 points in the Elaboration Skills, and 16.87 points in the Responding Skills. The most dramatic increases were in the Listening Group for this particular student.

The results for Student 2 indicate very stable baseline scores with a variation of only .25 points between the baselines of the three skill groups. This indicates a lack of generalization effects across the three groups. Intervention effects were most dramatic for the Responding Skills with a differential of 16 points between baseline and post-intervention mean scores. The differential in mean scores for the Elaboration Skills was 14.83 points and for the Listening Skills, 14.38 points.

The results for Student 3 are generally the least dramatic of the four subjects. Differences in mean scores between baseline and post-intervention range from 11 points in the Listening Skills, 11.83 points in the Elaboration Skills, and 11.62 points in the Responding Skills. These are the lowest differentials in scores of all four subjects and are partially explainable by the fact that scores during baseline for this student were generally higher than the others,

indicating that the student's skills at the beginning of the project were at a relatively higher level. There was no evidence of generalization effects for this student, in fact, baseline scores were somewhat lower in the Responding Group than in either of the other two groups. Thus, explication and practice in the first two skill groups did not effect the baseline scores of the third group.

The results for Student 4 showed the highest increases in Listening scores with a differential of 15 points and least in the Responding group with a differential of 13.75 points between baseline and post-intervention mean scores. Generally, scores for this student tended to be more erratic than those of the other three students and baseline scores were generally lower.

Generally, the teaching strategy can be seen to have been effective in producing an escalation in scores for all subjects across all three of the skill groups. Table 6 illustrates the mean differences in scores. The means of combined scores of all four subjects have been computed for each of the project phases and are shown in this table.

TABLE 6

Comparison of Means for Four Subjects

| Skill Group | X̄ During Baseline | X̄ Post-Intervention |
|---|---|---|
| Listening Skills | 19.31 | 31.38 |
| Elaboration Skills | 19.79 | 33.04 |
| Responding Skills | 20.12 | 34.56 |

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The first part of this chapter will be concerned with the
behavioral changes noted within each skill group. Generally, these
pertain to the more qualitative changes demonstrated in student
interviewing behaviors. Subsequently, explanations for the reflected
outcomes are considered and some of the possible implications for
utilization of this teaching strategy will be examined. Finally,
suggestions for replication of the project and the possible limitations
of the present methodology will be discussed.

Listening Skills

The effects obtained on scores relating to the listening skills
after introduction of the teaching strategy seem to be the least dramatic
of all three groups. This result is explainable by the fact that most
students have had more previous knowledge and experience with the
behaviors constituting these skills. The notable exception is with
the behaviors associated with perception-checking which reflected very
low baseline scores. Students had difficulties in verbally and
explicitly checking their perceptions with the clients. They tended to
be especially unaware of the incongruities displayed between clients'
verbal and non-verbal behaviors, or at least did not acknowledge these
incongruities verbally. The responses to non-verbal cues of the clients
was one area in which there was relatively little improvement over the

course of the project. This might be explanable by the fact that there
was no video feedback. Although the supervisor repeatedly pointed out
this deficiency, students could not directly observe these non-verbal
behaviors after the actual interview. This is considered as being one
area in which video feedback would have been more beneficial than the
audio feedback, which was provided.

In a study by Kelly (1972) eye contact and forward trunk lean
were found to correlate highly with client perceptions of empathy,
concern and respect. The incidence of appropriate eye contact and
relaxed, inclined posture showed great improvement over the project.
Also, included in the attending skills of Skill Group 1 were the verbal
following behaviors associated with the acknowledgement of client
verbal messages. These are elsewhere (Rosen and Lieberman, 1972)
classified as stimulus-response congruence responses. The increased
use of these skills, as indicated by a decrease in interruptions and
worker initiated agendas was evident as students increasingly demonstrated
a willingness to attend to those verbalizations which seemed of most
concern to the clients.

Finally, the students seemed much more able by the end of the
project to cope with silences and pauses in the conversation. The pace
of the interviews slowed down considerably, as students began to feel
more comfortable with the inevitable, but often very productive attempts
of the client to verbalize his concerns.

Elaboration Skills

D'Augelli (1974) among others has associated the asking of open-
ended questions with greater counselor effectiveness. At the beginning

of the project, students generally overused the interrogative type questioning. The number of closed-ended questions was greatly reduced and the use of open-ended questions was significantly increased by the students over the course of the program. The behaviors involved in this group showed the most dramatic increases in scores of all groups. Also, students seemed to obtain most benefit from the feedback afforded by the audio tapes in relation to these verbal behaviors. Tapes could readily be stopped in response to an ill-phrased question and the student requested by the supervisor to rephrase the question. Because of the specificity of the request, students exhibited little difficulty in applying the principles they had learned with respect to these skills. The use of 'why' questions especially decreased as they were seen to be, in many instances, non-productive and students could readily discern this by the type of nondirect responses they tended to elicit from clients. They were also seen to be in a sense moralizing and served to alienate the client in some instances. Students, over the course of the program, were increasingly able to phrase their questions in a flexible manner thereby providing the client with maximum opportunities for self-exploration.

The effectiveness and necessity of partialization of client problems has been well documented in the literature (eg. Shulman, 1979). Students generally improved in these behaviors. The most notable improvement was evident in their abilities to focus on the present situation of the client. The lack of this facility did much to lower the scores during baseline measurements. By the end of the project,

however, there were fewer diversions into the reasons for past client behavior and a much greater focus on 'here and now' situations. Students also demonstrated a much greater facility in breaking down complex problem situations into their component parts and in the ordering of priorities.

## Responding Skills

This group had the longest baseline phase and consequently the shortest follow-up period. It is felt that a longer follow-up period would have been beneficial and would have produced a greater positive escalation in scores. Unfortunately, time limitations did not allow for this as it coincided with the end of term.

(a) Reflection of Feelings. While most students demonstrated some competence in reflecting the content of client verbalizations at the beginning of the program, more difficulties were encountered in demonstrating that they understood and could respond to the underlying feelings of the client. These are often not directly expressed by the client and require greater insight on the part of the student. By the end of the project the students had made considerable progress in their abilities to respond appropriately to the feeling component in client verbalizations, especially the more obvious ones. The overuse of stereotyped verbal responses such as 'it seems to me' decreased, and students demonstrated more flexibility in their wording of these reflections. Students also responded well to the necessity for being tentative in their reflections and they were generally more accurate.

Whereas at first the students often demonstrated a compulsion to rush
in with questions and observations to the client, by the end of the
project the pace had slowed down considerably and students were more
thoughtful in their verbal responses.

     (b) Summarization. Accurate summarization of affect is seen
by many authors (eg. D'Augilli, 1974; Brammer, 1973) as being an
effective interviewing skill. Students had problems in the area of
clarifying in summary statements respective roles, and most difficulties
were encountered in verbalizing what their own roles were in relation
to client-worker relationships. This is not surprising considering
that social workers generally have problems in defining what it is they
'do'. The students did make some progress in these behaviors, however,
and were eventually verbalizing, with greater specificity, their roles
and most importantly, the possible goals of intervention. They also
made considerable progress in the ability to provide continuity within
the interview and from one interview to the next by appropriately
summarizing interview content to the client.

     Generally, later interviews demonstrated more reflection of
feeling, less premature advice-giving, more client-focused and less
other-focused responses on the part of the students. Greater
opportunities were provided for the (role-played) clients to focus
on their own concerns, thus giving them more responsibility for the
interviews. Later interviews also produced changes in the role-played
client behaviors which are interesting to note. Participants became
noticeably more comfortable towards the end of the program. This was
evident by the more lengthly role-plays. Furthermore, not only was

there more 'talk' by the clients, but the content was self-exploratory
rather than about the external topics evident in earlier sessions.
Ultimately any counseling skill must be evaluated by its impact on
clients, and if we are to assume that increased, subject-relevant,
talk on the part of the client is useful, then the project can be seen
to have produced very positive results in clients' behaviors, as well
as student skills.


## Implications


The traditional practice of a reliance on the process recording
as the sole method of evaluation entails the inherent danger that the
student may go through the entire clinical practice sequence without
knowing the specifics of how his behaviors impact clients. 'Doing'
is experiential in nature, whereas most learning is focused toward
cognitive understanding and provides no feedback on whether the
student can actually 'do' what is required. The methodology utilized
in this project has the great advantage of tying behavior to
specifiable activities; for example, 'nervousness' becomes 'wringing
hands', 'frowning', and/or 'fidgiting'. These are activities which
the student can readily understand and relate to.


The approach utilized in this project allows students not only
the opportunity of hearing verbal critques from the supervisor, but also
to verify their perceptions with the taped reproductions. The instant
replay capability of the audiotapes is also instrumental in reinforcing

desirable behaviors and the impact upon clients is more clearly
recognizable. The effect of re-experiencing the interview through
the recordings followed immediately by focused feedback seems to
create the conditions necessary for maximum learning.

The literature (eg. Bandura, 1969) indicates that a major
source of social learning occurs through observing the behaviors of
others. This modeling provides substantially more information than
can be conveyed through a verbal description especially when the
concern is with behaviors. Frequently, in the absence of standardized
measures, instructors are reluctant to demonstrate their own practice
skills, thus depriving the students of the modeling facet so
important to the learning of skills. The use of the modeling
procedures involved in this project has a great potential for use by
social work educators not only in the context of interviewing but in
other related clinical skills.

It is considered that the use of this methodology is perfectly
amenable for use with larger groups. In fact, it could be beneficial
in that there would be a greater variability of feedback as students
listened to each others' tapes. The size of the groups should not
practically exceed six to eight members, however, because of the
necessity for individual feedback and instruction. Finally, the
range of individual skills considered for inclusion in the program
could be expanded considerably. The use of confrontation skills, is a
notable example of an interviewing skill for which time limitations
did not permit inclusion in the present project. There are also
research possibilities for the arrangement of a hierarchy of

interviewing skills progressing from minimum to maximum complexity and utilizing this methodology in the teaching of the various stages.

## Limitations of the Project

Intervening factors other than the teaching strategy itself were undoubtedly influencing. Students generally differ in their capacity to role play. The results show that in the first role play the scores were relatively much lower than in subsequent sessions. Thus, in addition to the relative ability to role-play, practice in role-playing itself was probably an influencing factor. It seems reasonable to assume, also, that students could relate to some problem situations better than others, and this was in fact demonstrated during the project. It seemed desirable, however, in view of the increased learning opportunities to include as many different client problem situations as possible, thereby, enlarging the experience repertoire of the students.

The model tapes were not as explicit as would be desirable and at times, they reflected theoretical biases in terms of counseling style. Generally these difficulties were overcome by pointing out these deficiences to the students and emphasizing the points deemed necessary by the project supervisor in order to illustrate the particular skill in question. The scripts for the model tapes were taken from published materials. These typescripts reflected in some instances a counseling style, such as non-directive counseling, in addition to the particular skill for which it was chosen. Scripts taken from Rogers (1976) and Kahn & Cannell (1972) proved to be

less skill specific and more style-biased than scripts taken from
Ivey & Gluckstern, (1974). In the replication of this project it is
recommended that these types of theoretical biases be avoided in the
model tapes.

Finally, the use of video taping would have been an asset to
the project since the efficacy of this medium is undoubtedly
especially useful in the explication of non-verbal behaviors. The
reason for not utilizing video models was primarily because this
equipment was not available in the agencies involved in the project.

## Concluding Remarks

"Social Workers spend more time in interviewing than in any
other single activity. It is the most important most frequently
employed social work skill," (Kadushin, 1972, p.7). In spite of the
emphasis on direct practice and the inherent need for interviewing
competence, social work educators have given relatively little
attention to the evaluation of interviewing skills. The present
study provides encouraging evidence that interviewing skills can be
taught during field practice supervisory sessions, by utilizing
generally available instructional materials. The approach offers
certain advantages in that it focuses on single skills which the
student can master and provides an empirical base for the evaluation
of the student by the supervisor. In addition to the advantages of
the didactic method already explicated, it provides an experiential

component deemed necessary for the adequate preparation of the
student for actual practice. It provides a continual sense of
achievement for the student and is a great motivating influence. The
data suggests that the students were more effective in their
interviewing skills subsequent to the teaching program. The
continual escalation and continuity of the higher scores during
the follow-up phases suggests that these behaviors became integrated
into the skill repertoire of each student.

Social work educators have traditionally relied upon the
field practicum to provide students with adequate learning experiences
in interviewing. This is not always in the control of the school of
social work, however, as learning experiences offered to students
vary greatly from agency to agency depending on the service
orientation. The methodology advocated in this project, with its
utilization of many varied client problem situations presents a
partial solution to the problem of gaps in learning opportunities.

Another advantage of this approach is that it can be quite
atheoretical. This is seen to be an important factor in view of
the current emphasis in social work education on producing
"generalist" practioners. These skills can be utilized by social
workers of any theoretical persuasion or in any type of agency.
It is felt that whatever theory or strategy guides the student in
intervention, these interviewing skills are a necessary and essential
part of his preparation for practice.

The training programs in the past have been on an either/or
basis - either a didactic, highly cognitive approach which emphasizes

the shaping of interviewing style, or an experiential, accepting
approach which focuses on student growth and development. In an
article by Truax, Carkhuff and Douds (1964) the difference between
the experiential and the didactic models is seen as being analogous to
the differences between the inductive and the deductive orientation.
In didactic learning the flow is downward to the student, while in
the experiential model the focus is upon attitudinal change and the
flow is upward. It is felt that a combination of these two
orientations is more likely to produce the conditions necessary for
maximum utilization of the field practicum experience.

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APPENDIX A

ROLE-PLAY SITUATIONS

## SITUATION #1.

### Social Worker

You are a social worker at the Department of Social Services in the Child Welfare Division. You have received a referral from a neighbour regarding a Mrs. Dunphy, who is allegedly neglecting her three children. The neighbour reports that Mrs. Dunphy goes out every night and leaves an eleven year old to babysit her three children aged 5, 3, and 1 years. She comes home quite late and according to the neighbour often in an intoxicated state with various sailors who happen to be in port.

You are about to make an initial home visit to Mrs. Dunphy to investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged neglect of the children.

### Client

You are Mrs. Cecilia Dunphy, age 26. You have three children: Mark, age 5, Theresa, age 3, and Monica, aged 1 year. You were married for three years to the father of Mark and Theresa. However, he left to go to the mainland and has not been heard from for the past three years. The marriage was hell with drinking and frequent beatings and you were not sorry when he left. You are in receipt of social assistance and feel that you have the right to a little relaxation at nights. Even though the girl you leave to babysit is young, you feel that she is adequate. Besides, you have so little money and she doesn't expect much money for her services. You have no idea that the neighbour has complained about you and resent the intrusion of the child welfare worker.

## SITUATION #2

### Social Worker

You are a social worker at a Home Care Agency. You have been seeing Mr. Dollard, age 68 for the past month and visiting him at his apartment. He lives alone and recently hurt himself in a fall. He was referred to your agency after discharge from hospital because there is some question as to whether he can manage living on his own. He walks with great difficulty and in spite of his protestations, you can see that he has great difficulty in performing the routine, necessary chores around the apartment. He tends to avoid cooking and lives on tinned goods. In addition to his difficulties with walking, he is very hard of hearing and sometimes gets very confused in conversation. On one point, however, he is emphatic - he doesn't want to go into a nursing home, he wants to live by himself with "no interference" as he calls it. Unfortunately, the more you see of his living conditions the more you realize that it's impossible for him to continue living this way. He had no relatives who can assist him and lives on his Old Age Security pension.

At this point in time, you are convinced that his only alternative is to go into an Old Age Home. Your task is to try and help him to see, in spite of his denials, his inability to care for himself in the manner which he has been doing.

## SITUATION #2 (Continued)

Client

Your name is Mr. Dollard, aged 68. You have been living on your own for the past ten years since your wife died. You never had any children and have long since lost contact with any relatives. You were managing quite well until you had a fall which resulted in your hospitalization for a month. Since discharge you have been visited by a social worker from a Home Care Agency. You value your independence highly and definitely don't want to go into a nursing home. You see nothing wrong with the way you are living, you don't care that much about eating anyway and manage quite well on tinned beans and corned beef. You feel that it should be your right to live the way you want to.

You like your social worker, but you are afraid she will "put you away," so while she is there you pretend to be feeling much better than you actually are.

## SITUATION #3

### Social Worker

You are a social worker working in the social assistance division. You have received a referral from the intake worker to see a Mrs. Kelvin. Mrs. Kelvin is 51 years old and has lived alone for the past three years. During this time she has been a factory worker. She had an accident more than two years ago and had to have an operation. She returned to work two months after the operation but was physically unable to continue working and she has not been working for several months. She has living with her a son, who for the past two months has not worked. She has exhausted her savings.

She is presently in the process of being evicted and cannot find alternate living accommodations.

### Client

You are Mrs. Kelvin, age 51 years. Your husband died three years ago and since that time you have been living alone, except for the past two months. Your son is presently living with you having just been discharged from the army. However, he has not been able to procure employment.

You have always been a fairly self-sufficient person and have strong feelings about seeking financial assistance. You were steadily employed as a factory worker until two years ago when you had a car accident and had to have an operation on your leg. After discharge

## SITUATION #3 (Continued)

Client (Continued)

from the hospital you went back to work, but found that you were
physically unable to continue working. You were living on your
savings but find that they are now nearing exhaustion. Matters have
come to a head recently because the house in which you have been
renting an apartment for the past ten years has been sold and you
have been given notice to find alternate accommodations within two
months. You have tried in vain to find alternate accommodations
but this has proven impossible with your limited financial resources
and the scarcity of apartments.

You are hoping the social worker will be able to find an
apartment and also provide some temporary financial assistance until
you can go back to work.

SITUATION #4

## Social Worker

You are a social worker at a Detoxification Centre. You have
noted that one of the residents, Hank, has been here on two previous
occasions, stays overnight and leaves in the morning. Hank is 38 years
old and lives with his mother. He is sporadically employed and uses
the Centre pretty much as a flop house when he can't make it home.

You have asked Hank to come and see you as you want to find
out more about the nature of his drinking problem and how you can
possibly help him.

## Client

Your name is Hank, age 38. You are living with your mother,
who is a recipient of Old Age Security. You have never left home and
are generally quite comfortable living there. She washes your clothes
and provides the meals. When you are employed you give her all the
money you can, and when you are unemployed you both manage on her
pension. You have two older brothers, both married with families.
Drinking has always been prevalent with the male members of your
family although other family members have steady jobs. They tend
to drink on weekends.

You don't feel that you have any particular problem with
alcohol but lately have been feeling quite depressed about having no
money. You have not worked for over a year and the unemployment

SITUATION #4 (Continued)

Client (Continued)

insurance payments have now terminated. You have gone around to a
couple of places but no luck in getting a job. When the social worker
at the Centre asked to see you, you agreed thinking that maybe he could
help you out in finding employment.

## SITUATION #5

### Social Worker

You are a social worker at a detoxification centre. You saw
Hank last week, at which time you discussed job possibilities and
his drinking problem, but is very anxious to obtain employment. You
found, after talking to one of his former employers (with his
permission), that he was fired because of drinking on the job. Hank
has repeatedly denied that his drinking interferes with his work.
During this interview you confront Hank with the information given by
his former employer.

### Client

Your name is Hank, and you saw the social worker at the Centre
a week ago. You hoped that she would be able to assist you in finding
employment at the time. Since you last saw her though, you resumed
heavy drinking and have been for the past two days a patient at the
local hospital on the psychiatric unit. You have had another attack
of the DT's and you are really worried about these attacks. You are
now more willing to admit that perhaps the drinking has gotten out of
control. You are anxious to get some help with this problem.

## SITUATION #6

### Social Worker

You are a social worker at Family Court. You have been asked by the presiding judge to make a recommendation to the court with regard to the disposition of a jeuvenile male, aged 15, accused of shoplifting. The judge would like you to find out about the boy's home situation and recommend a course of action, e.g., placement in a foster home, family counseling, detention home, etc. You have been given the following information regarding the boy:

- 15 years old.
- in Grade 9, failed Grade 7, poor academic record.
- lives with mother and step-father and three siblings.
- has no prior "record".
- he was caught leaving Woolco with a $40 watch stuffed in his pocket. When apprehended by the security guard he reacted by shrugging and returning the watch to the guard. The boy was in "rags" at the time and was dirty and had several bruises on his face.

### Client

Your name is Charlie and your age is 15 years. You are in Grade 9 at school, but generally have a very poor academic record. You have been assigned to see the social worker at Family Court because of a shoplifting incident in which you were caught stealing a watch from Woolco.

### SITUATION #6 (Continued)

#### Client (Continued)

Your natural father died when you were five, and your mother married your present step-father three years ago. You have resented this man moving into your house, especially since he gets quite violent when he drinks and has beaten your mother on several occasions. You have taken to spending very little time at home and hang around with a group of boys who drink, smoke and engage in petty thievary, mainly shoplifting.

Your mother is very concerned about you and your activities but seems to be so taken up with your step-father that she has little time for anyone else. You hate school and are just wating for the time when you can leave.

## SITUATION #7

### Social Worker

This is your third contact with Charlie, who is accused of shoplifting. You are a social worker at a Family Court Agency. Since the last individual interview with Charlie, you have seen and talked with his parents. From the information you gathered at this family interview it seems that his parents are willing to make an effort to change things at home providing that Charlie is willing to make some changes as well.

In this interview you want to discuss with Charlie his feelings about his home situation. You particularly are interested in how he feels about making changes in his behavior such as going to school regularly, his attitude (negative) towards his step-father, and his fraternizing with a group of delinquent boys.

### Client

Your name is Charlie and you have another apointment to see the social worker at family court. You are very nervous about the upcoming court case, and don't quite trust the social worker. You were somewhat surprised at your step-father's attitude, and are sceptical about his willingness to change some of his offensive behaviors. You feel that he was really just 'putting on an act' and suspect that he doesn't really care about you.

## SITUATION #8

### Social Worker

You are a social worker with an alcohol addiction centre. You have seen Pat on one other occasion and at that time you found him to be a very talkative client. Pat has a severe drinking problem. He finds it very easy to talk about his drinking problem but seems reluctant to do anything about it.

### Client

Your name is Pat and you are 24 years old. You are married and have two children, but your wife has left you. You very much want to be reconciled with your wife but she refuses to speak to you. You are presently living with your mother who nags you continuously about your drinking. You are presently unemployed.

## SITUATION #9

### Social Worker

You are a social worker at a family service agency. You are presently seeing an unmarried, pregnant girl named Pat. You have had three interviews with her and up until now she has not been able to express what she feels about the pregnancy. She is torn between the conflicting demands of her family, her boyfriend and her own feelings. More than anything, Pat is looking to you for a solution to her problem. You have tried to make it clear to Pat that you cannot make the decision for her, only point out alternatives, and maybe help her to recognize what she really feels about the situation.

### Client

Your name is Pat, and you are 15 years old and pregnant. You have been 'going steady' with Joe for the past two years. Joe is in Grade XI and considered quite a rebel. He is now serving a six-month jail sentence for possession of marijuana. You love Joe but are very unsure of wanting to spend the rest of your life with him. Your family has always been a close one and they were shocked to hear of your pregnancy. There is disagreement over what should be done at this point. Your sister thinks that you should have an abortion. Your parents will not hear of your marrying Joe and they are against abortion. Meanwhile, you feel caught in the middle of all the conflict.

## SITUATION #10

### Social Worker

This is a continuation of Situation #9. At your last interview with Pat, she still seemed to be very confused and in need of information. One of her main concerns was that if she decided to have the baby, could she stay in school. Since the last interview you have gone with Pat and talked to the school principal, who agrees that she can, in fact, stay in school. You have also arranged for Pat to get more information on adoption and abortion. Pat is still undecided about what to do.

### Client

You were somewhat relieved to find out that you could stay in school but now the decision still has to be made about the abortion. You don't want to hurt your parents by going against their wishes, but you realize that looking after the baby will be a burden to them. You are considering adoption, but you don't feel that you will be able to give the baby up after it is born.

SITUATION #11

## Social Worker

You are a social worker at an alcohol service centre. You have been asked by a physician to see Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith is 50 years old, married and has three children, who are all married and living away from home. She visited the doctor because she is feeling continuously depressed and he discovered during the visit that she was drinking quite steadily and feels that this may be a problem. Mr. Smith seems very depressed and has said to the doctor "sometimes I feel that my life isn't worth living anymore."

## Client

You are 50 years old, and have been married for twenty-six years. You live with your husband, age 65, who has been retired for the past two years. However, he still acts as a consultant for his firm and has an office downtown where he spends most of his weekdays. On the weekends he goes fishing, watches hockey games and reads a lot. You have three sons, all of whom are married and living in other provinces.

You are finding the time 'hanging heavy on your hands' lately. For the past year you have been feeling really "low" and drinking frequently. For no reason that you can think of you find tears welling up constantly. You feel as if you have the weight of the world on your shoulders and drinking seems to help temporarily. You don't feel that drinking is a problem because you only drink in the evenings to make the time pass.

## SITUATION #12

### Social Worker

This is a continuation of Situation #11. You have seen Mrs. Smith several times and have been able to build up a good rapport with her. She is still very depressed but seems to enjoy talking to you. Mrs. Smith seems to have several problems but they are all related to her feelings of uselessness and also there is obviously a lack of communication with her husband.

Discussions so far have been pretty general and today you feel that it would be beneficial to focus on one problem at a time. Mrs. Smith is beginning to realize that she is going to have to make some changes in her life and needs help in doing so.

### Client

You very much enjoy these sessions with the social worker, since she is the only one that you are able to discuss your feelings with. You are feeling increasingly alienated from your husband. More than anything you want to feel worthwhile again.

APPENDIX B

RATING SCALES

## ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

## ATTENDING SKILLS RATING SCALE

1. --- Student has the ability to establish contact with client by looking directly at him when he talks.

2. --- Student has the ability to appear relaxed with posture slightly leaning forward.

3. --- Student is able to refrain from topic jumping.

4. --- Student is able to listen to client without interrupting unduly or frequently.

5. ---Student is able to selectively attend to those verbalizations which seem to be of most concern to the client.

## ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

### PERCEPTION-CHECKING SKILLS RATING SCALE

1. --- Student is able to rephrase what the client is saying using new words to show client that he understands.

2. --- Student is able to ask for feedback from client as to whether his perceptions of what client is saying are accurate.

3. --- Student is able to appear relatively comfortable with silences and when necessary can make tentative interpretations to client of what they may mean.

4. --- Student is able to respond to and discuss with client present incongruities in client's verbal and non-verbal behaviors.

5. --- Student is able to drop incorrect perceptions based on client feedback.

## ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

## QUESTIONING SKILLS RATING SCALE

1. --- Student is able to ask questions which elicit feelings from client as well as informtion.

2. --- Student is able to ask many open-ended questions beginning with words such as 'how' or 'could'.

3. --- Student is able to use the skill of questioning selectively as a reinforcement or a non-reinforcement of what client is saying.

4. --- Student is able to ask questions which elicit self-exploration on the part of the client.

5. --- Student is able by his questioning to indicate to the client his interest and concern.

## ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

## FOCUSING & SPECIFICITY RATING SCALE

1. --- Student is able to encourage client by partializing skills to focus on one problem at a time.

2. --- Student is able to encourage client to move from general concerns to more specific problems.

3. --- Student is able to pinpoint statements from client's conversations which he thinks are the real concerns.

4. --- Student is able to continuously bring the focus of the interview back to the 'here and now' situation of the client.

5. --- Student is able to use the skill of specificity in formulating realistic goals with the client.

## ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

## REFLECTION OF FEELINGS RATING SCALE

1. --- Student is able to note emotional content in client's verbalizations and present them back to the client in clearer form.

2. --- Student is able to relect accurately feelings which are only hinted at by the client.

3. --- Student is able to avoid the use of stereotyped responses overly to reflect feelings.

4. --- Student is able to be tentative in reflecting feelings.

5. --- Student is able to avoid 'overshooting' with too much depth of feelings or reading more into client statements than is really there.

# ENHANCING INTERVIEWING SKILLS

## SUMMARIZATION RATING SCALE

1. --- Student is able to note themes and emotional overtones in client concerns and at various points to discuss these with client.

2. --- Student is able to use summary statements in order to clarify goals.

3. --- Student is able to use summary statements in order to clarify respective roles.

4. --- Student is able by summarizing statements to encourage client to explore certain areas more completely.

5. --- Student is able to use summary statements to provide continuity within the interview and/or from one interview to the next.

# APPENDIX C

## DEFINITIONS OF THE NUMERICAL RATINGS

## DEFINITIONS OF THE NUMERICAL RATINGS

| Number | Definition |
|--------|-----------|
| 1 | The student demonstrates no perceivable ability to exhibit this skill. |
| 2 | The student demonstrates an ability to exhibit this skill which is akin to normal conversation but is inadequate for the purposes of a social work interview. |
| 3 | The student demonstrates an adequate degree of competence in exhibiting this skill but is inconsistent in its usage. |
| 4 | The student demonstrates an above average degree of competence in exhibiting this skill and is consistent in its usage. |
| 5 | The student demonstrates a high degree of competence in exhibiting this skill, in addition, he demonstrates creativity and insight in its usage. |

## APPENDIX D

### INSTRUCTION SHEETS

## Enhancing Interviewing Skills

### Skill Group 1 - Listening Skills

#### (A) Attending Behavior

Good attending behavior is the basis for any interview. It enables the
client to feel comfortable in the interview situation and to express
himself more fully and meaningfully. Later stages, e.g., elaboration
are designed to focus the clients' attention but this first stage is
crucial in that the worker must convey to the client his interest,
warmth and understanding.

The social work interview is different from the ordinary conversation
in which there is a give and take of opinions in that the interview is
centered on the client and his concerns, not the interviewer. One of
the most difficult tasks for the beginning interviewer is to let the
client expound on his concerns without profuse questioning, interruptions
and jumping from topic to topic in a tense manner.

#### Four types of activities characterize good attending:

1. Relaxed posture - the worker leans slightly toward the client,
   in a relaxed manner, indicating his intent.

2. Worker should initiate and maintain eye contact. This is
   different from a fixed staring which can make the client nervous
   and appears false.

3. Gestures and body movements which indicate to the client the
   worker's interest and his comfortability in the interview
   situation.

4.    Verbal following behavior which follows directly from what the
      client is saying. Directing one's comments and questions to
      topics provided by the client not only helps the client to
      develop an area of discussion but reinforces his free expression.
      This results in more spontaneity and animation in the clients
      discussion and ultimately in greater understanding.

## Guidelines for Effective Attending Behavior.

1.    Establish contact through looking at the client when he talks.

2.    Maintain a natural relaxed posture which indicates your interest.

3.    Use natural gestures which communicate your intended messages.

4.    Use verbal statements which relate to the client's statements
      without interruptions, questions or new topics. There is no
      need to talk about yourself or your opinions at this early
      stage other than in clarifying your role and that of the
      agency.

      Good attending behaviour is necessary throughout the interview
      but is particularly crucial at the beginning. It has a powerful
      reinforcing effect in helping the client to build a sense of
      responsibility for the interview.

## (B) Perception - Checking

Perception checking involves paraphrasing, clarification, and feedback.

a.    Paraphrasing is basically a restatement of what the client has
      said in fewer and more precise words. It communicates to the
      client that you are attempting to understand his basic message
      and that you have been "with him" during his verbal explorations.

The worker translates his perceptions of what the client is saying into more simple, precise and relevant wording - he avoids adding his own ideas. This has the effect of showing the client that he is being understood, it gives him a clearer perception of what he said and he feels encouraged to go on.

b. Clarification is often needed in the interview situation when the worker is unclear about the client's messages.

Example: "I'm confused, let me try to state what I think you are saying..."

"I'm not sure I understand, could you tell more?"

Clarifying remarks are stated in terms of the worker's feelings of confusion, thereby avoiding implications of criticism of the client. The effects of clarifying responses or requests on the client should be more clear, client statements such as efforts to rephrase, summarize or to illustrate.

c. Feedback entails asking the client for verification of your perceptions of what his basic message is. It is a method of giving and receiving information regarding the accuracy of the communication. It is different from social chatter in that we rarely check with another in a social situation about what we are really trying to say. In helping relationships we reserve this process and put a heavy premium on clear communication aided by frequent perception checks.

Example: "You seem to be very irritated with me, is that right?" The primary purpose is to check out misperceptions before they increase misunderstanding.

### Guidelines for Perception Checking

1.  Listen closely for the basic message of the client.

2.  Admit confusion about the client's meaning where it exists.

3.  Ask for clarification, repetition or an illustration where necessary.

4.  Restate a concise and simple summary of the client's message.

5.  Ask for confirmation directly from the client regarding the accuracy of your perceptions.

6.  Allow the client to correct your perception if it is inaccurate.

## Enhancing Interviewing Skills

### Skill Group 2 - Elaboration Skills

Whereas Listening Skills are to a certain extent passive, Elaboration Skills require more active participation on the part of the worker. They are to a certain extent "leading" in that through selective attention and inattention to what the client is saying the worker determines which are the most important issues to the client and helps the client through his questioning and focusing skills to "zero in" on the issues and goals of treatment.

### Purposes:

1. By inviting the client to elaborate on certain issues, the client experiences more responsibility for the relationship.

2. Enhance the client's and the worker's understanding of the central issues.

3. Pinpoint the conversation in areas that worker feels would be fruitful to explore.

4. Tend to reduce confusions, diffusions and vagueness.

5. In focusing continually on the client, they encourage self-exploration.

6. Encourage client to be more specific and partialize complex issues into more workable components.

## (A) Questioning Skills

Typically questions can be classified into one of two categories -
open or closed questions. In the social work interview, both types
are utilized but for differing reasons. Closed questions typically
begin with words such as "is", "are", "do", or "did". They elicit very
limited amounts of information from the respondent. They can be used
when the social worker wishes to close off an area for further
discussion, or for information purposes. They are useful following
an extended rambling disclosure on the part of the client to finish
that line of thought. Open questions on the other hand, elicit the
most information from the respondent and typically begin with words
like "what", "how", or "could". Whereas closed questions can be
answered with a "yes" or a "no", the use of open questions requires
further elaboration on the part of the client.

## Purposes of Open Questioning

1. It provides the client with greater alternatives for self-
   expression.

   Example #1 - Open: "Could you tell me a little about your last
   job?"

   Closed: "Did you like your last job?"

   Example #2 - Open: "How did you feel about your wife's ignoring
   you?"

   Closed: "Did you get angry at your wife for ignoring
   you?"

2. Open questions are designed to help the client to clarify his own
   problems rather than to solely provide information for the
   interviewer.

3. Open questions provide an open invitation to talk on the part of the client.

4. The overuse of closed questions forces the worker to concentrate so hard on the next question that he fails to listen or respond to the client. In addition, they give the client a sense of being interrogated.

5. Open questions help the client to give specific examples of behavior.

   Example: "Could you give me an example of how you don't get along with your husband?"

6. Open questions can be useful in helping the client to focus on his feelings or emotions.

   Example: Open - "What are you feeling as we talk about this?"

   Closed - "Do you feel anxious now?"

## Typical Uses of Questions

1. "What" questions are associated with facts and the gathering of information.

2. "How" questions are associated with process and feelings.

3. "Why" questions are associated with reasons.

4. "Could" questions provide the maximum amount of room for client self-exploration.

## Guidelines

1. Ask open-ended questions whenever possible.

2. Ask questions which elicit feelings from what the client is discussing rather than solely information.

3.  Ask questions that lead to clarification for the client rather than simple information for the worker. Leave the client free for self-exploration.

4.  Note silences in response to questioning and their possible implications.

## (B) Focusing and Specificity Skills

### Purposes

1.  The use of focusing statements in an interview pinpoints the conversation on aspects which the worker feels would be fruitful to explore. They are used mainly when the client is rambling or wandering over numerous topics or when the worker deliberately focuses in on one aspect of the clients discussion which he feels could be elaborated productively.

2.  They can be utilized as an aid to get the client in touch with his own feelings.

    Example: "You have been discussing many topics over the last few minutes, could you pick out the most important one to you and tell me more about it?"

    "What were your feelings as we've been talking bout this?".

3.  They tend to reduce confusions and helps in the formation of goals.

4.  They encourage the client to be active in the process and to retain primary responsibility for the relationship.

    Example: "Perhaps we could start by your telling me where you're at right now?"

5.  They tend to increase the discussion of feelings and increase understanding of those feelings for both client and worker.

6.      They introduce greater clarity by partializing concerns.

        Examples of focusing leads:

        1.  And then?

        2.  Tell me more.

        3.  How did you feel about that?

        4.  The repetition of one or two key words from the clients
            previous conversation is often used as an aid in focusing.

        5.  Give me an example.

        6.  What does that mean to you?

Focusing is a leading skill and for maximum effectiveness it depends on
the worker's ability to anticipate possible directions of thought. An
anticipation of where the client is going and responding with an
appropriate encouraging remark. By focusing the worker constantly
reinforces discussion upon the client himself. The use of personal
pronouns is seen to be a useful method in focusing.

## Enhancing Interviewing Skills

### Skill Group 3 - Responding

#### (A) Reflection of Feelings

Attending can be seen as being 'with' the client physically and verbally. Reflection of feeling is often viewed as being 'with' the client emotionally. Through selective attention to the feeling or emotional aspects of the client's expressions the interviewer reinforces the expression of such feelings. Reflection of feelings is different from paraphrasing in the sense that the latter emphasizes <u>content</u> of what was said, whereas, the former skill emphasizes the <u>emotions</u> which were perceived or observed while listening to actual content. Reflection involves being alert to the feelings being expressed rather than attending solely to the content - <u>how</u> the client is saying things. Example: The client may speak more quickly when communicating enthusiasm and more slowly when communicating discouragement.

#### Example #1

"So I'm wondering if you can help me decide on a new major" ... (Pause).

"I suppose if I did, I'd just bungle things again."

Possible responses: Which would you choose?

(a) Are you sure that it is necessary to leave the major you are now in?

(b) You feel that its pretty futile to try again.

(c) What majors have you been considering?

## Example #2

Client: "What do you think I ought to do - jump off a bridge or look for another University to flunk out of?"

Possible worker responses:

(a) There just doesn't seem to be any way out.

(b) Have you applied to other schools?

(c) Have you thought about trying the Trades College where there would be less competition.

The effectiveness of the skill of reflecting feelings depends to a great extent on the worker's ability to identify feelings and cues for feelings, of which the client himself may not be aware. Feelings are more subtle than emotions such as anger, love, or fear. Examples of feelings would be affection, pleasure, guilt or hostility. The more subtle feelings are often hidden behind words. The worker's task is to look for these hidden feelings and bring them out into the open for the client to recognize more clearly.

Accurate reflection of feelings goes beyond the reflection of verbalized feelings in that the worker also reads the body language of the client, which is expressing implied feeling nonverbally. The worker must respond to the total experience of the client which he observes. He notes, for example, rapidity of speech, heavy breathing, flushing, etc. When reflecting feelings implied in body language, the worker should first describe the behavior:

Example: "You are smiling (behavior), but I sense that you are really hurting inside (reflection of feeling).

## Purposes:

1. To show the client that we understand the world in the same manner in which the client is perceiving it.

2. To emphasize the feelings of the client rather than solely the content of what he is expressing.

3. To clarify confusing emotional overtones to the client so that he may better understand them.

4. To facilitate the building of trust in the relationship.

5. To invite feedback from the client as to the accuracy of worker's perceptions.

6. To serve as a reinforcement to the client for further self-exploration.

## Common errors in reflecting.

1. Stereotyping responses. Worker tends to begin reflections in the same monotonous way such as "you feel...", "it seems to me..." - there is a need for variation in style.

2. Timing - it is not necessary to reflect after every client statement - only occasionally.

3. Overshooting with too much depth of feeling or reading more into client statements than is really there.

Example: Client: "I don't know if I can stay overseas for a year without her."

Worker: "You feel you can't function at all unless she is with you."

4. Inappropriate language - the language must be appropriate to the cultural milieu of the client.

Example: Client: "I can't make it with girls, I'm so shy."

Worker: "Your inferiority complex really shows with girls."

## Guidelines for Reflection of Feelings

1.      Read and reflect the total message of the client including
        feelings, body language and content.

2.      Present tense reflection of "here and now" states are
        generally more effective.

3.      Select the best mix of content and feelings to fulfill the goal
        for understanding at each stage of the helping process.

4.      Receive feedback from the client confirming or disconfirming
        response as a cue about what to do next.

### (B) Summarization

Summarization is different from reflection in that it covers a longer
time period and involves a broad range of feelings which the client has
expressed verbally or non-verbally.

It is useful mainly in three ways.

1.      It may crystalize what the client has been discussing and focus
        on crucial issues.

2.      It serves as a stimulus for further discussion.

3.      It is invaluable as a form of feedback.

Summarization is one of the most powerful tools for conveying to the
client that you are "with" him and understand his problems. As such
it allows the worker to think deeply about what the client is feeling,
attend to his diverse emotions, then pull back, sort out what he sees,
separate himself from what seems objectively true and summarize for the
client what he senses.

## Purposes:

1. When structuring the beginning of a session by recalling high points of a previous interview.

2. When client's discussion has been confusing or rambling, it helps to bring him back to focus.

3. When plans for next steps require mutual assessment of what has been accomplished so far.

4. At the end of a session when the interviewer wishes to emphasize what has been learned.

5. To check out accuracy of worker perceptions.

6. To introduce termination of the relationship.

7. To clarify goals and respective roles.

8. To provide continuity from one interview to the next.

9. To encourage client in further self-exploration.

## Guidelines

1. Attend to the various themes and emotional overtones as the client speaks.

2. Put together key ideas and feelings into broad statements of his meanings.

3. Do not add new, divergent ideas to the summaries.

4. Decide if it would be more helpful for you to summarize or ask the client to summarize basic themes, agreements or plans.

5. In deciding on #4, the following considerations are relevant.

   a. To "warm up" a client at the beginning of an interview.

   b. To focus scattered thoughts.

c. To close discussion on certain themes.

d. To check your understanding of the interview's progress.

e. To encourage the client to explore certain themes more thoroughly.

f. To terminate the relationship.

g. To assure client that the interview is moving productively.

h. To point out that the interview is not moving productively.