

Being a Good Counselor

What Skills Are Important in Effective Counseling

This defines counseling and describes skills of an effective counselor, including being non-judgmental, having warmth, genuineness, discretion and other specifics.

Counseling involves a process, the aim of which is to help others to help themselves by making better choices and becoming better choosers of options. The counselor's repertoire of skills includes those of forming an understanding relationship, as well as interventions, focused on helping clients change specific aspects of their feeling, thinking and acting.

In a counseling relationship, the counselor and client work together to explore every aspect of the client's circumstances, enabling the individual to re-evaluate his or her experiences, capabilities and potential.

Counselors facilitate full and confidential expression of the client's feelings, without diverting any attention to their own feelings.

The responsibility for change is placed with the client. This means that when changes are made, they are self-motivated, and therefore more likely to last and to be effective. Self-reliance is a central tenet of counseling.

The counselor is perhaps the first person that the individual has met for a long time who truly listens without prejudice and whom he or she can trust utterly.

The potential to be [a good counselor](#) can be shown if certain qualities exist.

Judgment

A good counselor is someone who can learn not to make judgments on behalf of the person being helped. Although counselors have their own values, these should not be imposed on the client – and the counselor must retain the ability to listen to and accept the views of clients with other standards.

Patience and Acceptance

A counselor rarely needs to use his or her self control in dealing with people, even those people who are not likeable.

Experience

Learning to grow into a more complete person from the experience of life's hard knocks can be a valuable quality in a counselor.

Education

Formal degrees in psychology do not necessarily make good counselors, but a common sense approach is not sufficient. Good counselors are willing and able to learn about themselves and other people too.

Social Skills

It is not enough to be considered to be a good listener. Counselors learn through training how to perceive all aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication, and deliberately improve their listening skills by using appropriate techniques during counseling.

Genuineness and Warmth

Effective counselors have a genuine interest in other people. This is often referred to as respect or unconditional positive regard for the person being helped. People who do not need others in their lives may find this sort of warmth to unknown people as being problematic.

Discretion

Counselors must show complete discretion, never revealing what others say or do within the counseling context. Confidentiality is paramount in counseling relationships.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Counseling requires a lot of training, followed by much practice. A current job that will allow the possibility of a helping role could be very useful.

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