

Assessment vs. Helping: Differences and Skills

- ✓ **Assessment questions** may be either more *narrowly focused*, investigative kinds of questions, or *more general* in scope using questions that are more open-ended. Workers may use narrowly focused questions, sequenced in a more rigidly connected way, or chain, to explore allegations of abuse or neglect and for attempting clearly to understand the details of a particular incident or event. The questions are more specific and connected in such a way as to recreate the chain of circumstances, behaviors, and feelings associated with a specific event.

Workers may use more open-ended assessment questions to explore general client conditions, relationships, expectations, attitudes, beliefs, and etcetera. Workers may use open-ended, more general questions and narrowly focused assessment questions in the same interview. The more general questions might reveal circumstances or events that the worker wishes to explore more in-depth using narrowly focused questions.

- ✓ **Helping questions**, conversely tend to be more open-ended and geared toward identifying goals and facilitating movement toward goal accomplishment.

Workers may use assessment questions and helping questions in the same interview depending on the purposes, content, and flow of the interview as it unfolds. Issues explored in questions that are more general may reveal situations or events that require a closer look and the use of more specific and focused questions.