

# Interviewing Skills: Purpose, Process, Phases

## Three Purposes of an Interview

1. Provide or gather unit specific information.
2. Initiate or maintain purposeful engagement with the client/family or collaterals.
3. Initiate or maintain solution-focused movement toward goals.

## Interviewing: A Dynamic, Interactive Process

- Worker speaks.
- Client responds.
- Worker listens to the client. **(Tuning into Others)**
- Worker discerns client's feelings and meaning. **(Tuning into Others)**
- Worker assesses safety (client information needed and status of relationship,) requirements of CYS mission and role, own needs and comfort level, and relative priorities. (This internal assessment takes place in a matter of seconds.) **(Tuning into Self)**
- Worker formulates a response that best reflects the conclusions of the assessment.
- Worker speaks/acts again, and the process goes on. **(Displaying Understanding of Other's Feelings)**

The interactive interview is simple in terms of structure. However, in real time, effective interviewing requires the worker to develop a range of integrated knowledge and skills and, with practice, to be able to work the process through the various steps in a complete interview and throughout the life of a case.

## The Phases of a Casework Interview

1. Preparing for the work:
2. Beginning the Work: (Engaging the family)
  - a. Greeting and engaging the person/family with respect;
  - b. Clarifying purpose and role;
  - c. Identifying the agency and the family's goals;
  - d. Developing a clear "contract" for change with the family/person;
  - e. Planning how the work will be done.
3. Doing the Work: (Helping the family make the desired changes)
4. Ending the Work: (Closing or transferring the case)
  - a. Closing the process and evaluating the outcomes; and
  - b. Documenting the interview in writing.