



# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

A Guide for Health Care Providers Supporting the  
Use of Language Access Services

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a tool developed and adapted to help health care providers and staff acknowledge and validate the feelings and experiences of families.

Helping families understand and use language access services can create an environment of trust and respect for families whose preferred language is not English.

This guide provides techniques and examples to help support language access in health care settings through questions and statements.

Adapted from Homeless Resource Center



# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Open-ended Questions | Affirmation  
Reflective Listening | Summary Reflections

## Techniques to Get Started with Motivational Interviewing

# OARS



**OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**



**AFFIRMATION**



**REFLECTIVE LISTENING**



**SUMMARIZING**

Adapted from Homeless Resource Center

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## What is

## Motivational Interviewing?

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a person-centered way to help people feel motivated about making changes.

**Open-ended questions, affirmation, reflective listening, and summary reflections (OARS)** are the basic tools used in MI.

## Open-ended Questions

Invite the person to "tell their story" in their own words and not just give a yes or no answer.

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## Affirmations

Make statements that focus on a person's strengths and the behaviors that lead to positive change.

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## Reflective Listening

Show that you are interested and that you respect the knowledge of the person sharing their story.

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## Summary Reflections

Summarize what the person shared with you, making that the person feels recognized and heard.

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## **OARS: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**



Open-ended questions invite people to “tell their story” in their own words. Open-ended questions can be used often in conversation to learn more about what a person thinks, believes and feels. Remember to be open to listening to the person’s response, even if you do not agree.

### **Here are some examples of open-ended questions:**

- How can I help you with \_\_\_?
- Help me understand \_\_\_?
- How would you like things to be different?
- What are the good things about \_\_\_ and what are the less good things about it?
- When would you be most likely to \_\_\_?
- What do you think you will lose if you give up \_\_\_?
- What have you tried before to make a change?
- What do you want to do next?

### **Which one is an open-ended question?**



Are you concerned about language access?



Can you tell me your concerns about language access?



The question on the right is an open-ended question. It invites an explanation instead of a yes or no.

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## OARS: AFFIRMATIONS



Affirmations are statements that recognize a person's strengths and behaviors that lead to positive change. Affirmations help to build a person's confidence in their ability to change. To be effective, affirmations must be honest.

### Here are some examples of affirming responses:

- I appreciate that you are willing to meet with me today.
- You are clearly a very resourceful person.
- You handled yourself really well in that situation.
- That's a good suggestion.
- If I were in your shoes, I don't know if I could have managed so well.
- I've enjoyed talking with you today.

### Which one is an affirmation?



I appreciate that you are willing to share your concerns about language access.



I disagree with your concerns about language access.



The statement on the left is an affirmation. It is a positive statement about a person's willingness to share concerns and does not include negative judgments.



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## OARS: REFLECTIVE LISTENING



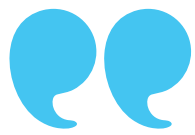
Reflective listening is a way to engage others and build trust and motivation to change.

Listening reflectively includes showing interest in what the person has to say and showing respect for the person's knowledge.

### There are three basic levels of reflective listening:

- **Repeating or rephrasing:** Listener repeats or substitutes words or phrases, and stays close to what the speaker has said. Example: It sounds like you...
- **Paraphrasing:** Listener makes a restatement in which the speaker's meaning is inferred. Example: Listen summaries what speaker shared.
- **Reflection of feeling:** Listener emphasizes emotional aspects of communication through feeling statements. This is the deepest form of listening. Example: So you feel...

### Which one is reflective listening?



Using children as your interpreter is not proper language access.



It sounds like you have concerns about language access and comfort with using our certified interpreter.



The statement on the right shows reflective listening. It rephrases the person's concerns and feelings.

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## OARS: SUMMARY REFLECTIONS



Summaries can be used any time during a conversation. They are especially helpful at when there is a transition in the conversation, like when the person has finished talking about a topic or has told a story about their experience. Summaries are a good way to end a conversation.

### Steps to make a summary reflection

- 1** Introduce your summary.
  - Let me see if I understand so far...
  - Here is what I've heard. Tell me if I've missed anything.
- 2** Give special attention to **change statements** that show a person's willingness to change. Miller and Rollnick (2002) identified four types of change statements.
  - **Problem recognition:** "I realize that I may not have enough information about language access."
  - **Concern:** "If there is no translation in my language, I could miss out on understanding important health information to keep my child from being sick."
  - **Intent to change:** "I'm going to seek out more information about language access."
  - **Optimism:** "I know I will get the information I need to understand how to access and use language services."
- 3** If the person expresses distrust, it is useful to **include both sides of their concern in the summary statement.**  
For example: "On the one hand..., on the other hand..."
- 4** It can be useful to include information in **summary statements from other sources** (e.g., your own lived experience, recommendations from trusted sources).

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## OARS: SUMMARY REFLECTIONS

### Steps to make a summary reflection

- 5 Be short and brief.**
- 6 End with an invitation.** For example:
  - Did I miss anything?
  - If that's correct, what other points are there to consider?
  - Anything you want to add or correct?
- 7** Depending on the person's response, the conversation may lead naturally to **planning for or taking steps towards the change goal.**

### Which one is a summary reflection?



Thanks for talking with me today.

**OR**

Let me see if I understand what you shared. You have concerns about language access, because if there is no translation in your language, you might not understand. However, you shared that you plan to seek out additional information. On the one hand, you expressed concerns about language access, but you are interested in learning more. Did I miss anything?



The second statement is a summary reflection. It paraphrases the conversation briefly, shows understanding of the concern, and invites the person to add to the summary.



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## OARS TIPS



Avoid disagreements  
and conflict



Allow the person to  
explore their own views



Express understanding  
to the person



Prevent a breakdown in  
communication

Adapted from Homeless Resource Center



# ENTREVISTA MOTIVACIONAL

Una guía para proveedores de servicios médicos  
que apoyan el uso de servicios de acceso al  
lenguaje

La entrevista motivacional (EM) es una herramienta desarrollada y adaptada para ayudar a los proveedores y al personal de servicios médicos a reconocer y validar los sentimientos y experiencias de las familias.

Ayudar a las familias a comprender y utilizar los servicios de acceso al lenguaje puede crear un entorno de confianza y respeto para las familias cuyo idioma preferido no es el inglés.

Esta guía proporciona técnicas y ejemplos para ayudar a respaldar el acceso al idioma en entornos de servicios médicos a través de preguntas y declaraciones.

Adapted from Homeless Resource Center

# ENTREVISTA MOTIVACIONAL

Abiertas | Afirmación  
Reflexión | Resumen

## Técnicas para comenzar con la Entrevista Motivacional

**A A R R**

