

Open-ended Questions and Reflective Listening Statements Exercise

Introduction: Discussions about wellbeing in the workplace can evoke intense emotions, create discomfort, and bring to light previously unknown challenges and opportunities. Specific communication techniques and strategies provide a relationship-centered approach for shared decision-making and building rapport and trust among coworkers.

Purpose: This activity invites participants to practice two motivational interviewing techniques: open-ended questions and reflective listening statements to discuss the topic of scheduling and its potential impact on workplace wellbeing.

Instructions:

1. You will work in teams of 3 or 4. There are three roles: (A) an interviewer, (B) an interviewee, and (C) an observer. For groups of four, two team members will be in the role of observer (C1 and C2) for the first round. Decide who will take on each role. If time permits, team members will switch roles.
2. The (A) interviewer will engage the (B) interviewee in a conversation about the impact of the work schedule on wellbeing. The (A) interviewer will utilize the motivational interviewing techniques of asking open-ended questions and using reflective listening statements. The (A) interviewer will begin the discussion by asking the (B) interviewee an open-ended question about barriers to wellbeing in the workplace. The (B) interviewee will then share concerns with the work schedule and how it affects their wellbeing. The (A) interviewer's task is to use open-ended questions and reflective listening techniques to build trust and establish rapport.

The (B) interviewee is tasked with responding to the prompts provided by the (A) interviewer and making their responses as realistic (and challenging) as they might be in a real-world discussion, such as:

- Providing only yes/no answers to close-ended questions.
- Demonstrating body language that suggests frustration, apathy, etc.
- Making statements that derail dialogue e.g., "here we go again—it's not like anything is ever going to change."
- Placing demands that are unrealistic for short-term change e.g., all weekends off, no on-call duty, etc.
- Blaming others for the challenges and taking no personal accountability for one's own wellbeing.
- Using "you" statements vs "I" statements.

The (C) observer has two tasks. First, the (C) observer will function as a timekeeper and make sure the conversation does not take more than 5 minutes. Second, the (C)

observer will use the form in the workbook to record the (A) interviewer's use of open-ended questions and reflective listening statements.

3. At the end of the 5 minutes, the (C) observer(s) will provide **descriptive feedback** to the (A) interviewer regarding use of open-ended questions and reflective listening skills during the conversation. Five minutes is allotted for giving/receiving feedback.

Quick Tip:

- a. Descriptive feedback = you asked three open-ended questions to start the meeting, including, "How do you feel about your schedule overall?" and "How can we address your scheduling concerns?"
- b. Not descriptive feedback = good job!

4. Round two (for groups of 3):

If your role in round 1 was:	Go to role:
A Interviewer	B Interviewee
B Interviewee	C Observer
C Observer	A Interviewer

Round two (for groups of 4):

If your role in round 1 was:	Go to role:
A Interviewer	B1 Interviewee1
B Interviewee	C1 Observer 1
C1 Observer 1	A Interviewer
C2 Observer 2	B2 Interviewee2

5. Round three (for groups of 3)

If your role in round 2 was:	Go to role:
B Interviewee	C Observer
C Observer	A Facilitator
A Facilitator	B Interviewee

Round three (for groups of 4):

If your role in round 2 was:	Go to role:
B1 Interviewee1	C1 Observer 1
C1 Observer 1	A Facilitator
A Facilitator	B Interviewee
B2 Interviewee2	C2 Observer 2

Don't

