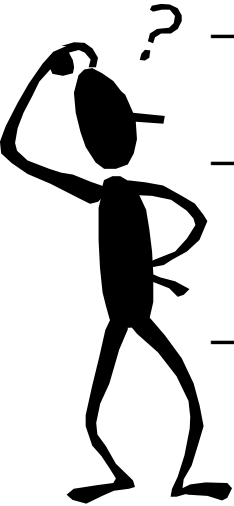


Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Why Do People Become Counselors?

- Most believe they can really help people.
- Some have a desire to help those that are less fortunate.
- Some want to help prevent people from having difficulties in the first place.
- Some want to help people reach their full potential.



Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Potentially Negative Reasons for Becoming a Counselor

- When a counselor *needs* to make a difference but has unrealistic expectations for helping.
- When a counselor has a need to care for others, the counselor may undermine the client's autonomy by *doing for* the client.
- When the counseling student has a need to solve his or her own problems.
- When the counselor has a need to be powerful or influential.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Counselor Interpersonal Dimensions that Affect Counseling Outcomes

- The ability to listen and convey understanding without judgment.
- The ability to be sensitive, empathic, and patient.
- The ability to convey to the client that the counselor values the client's experiences.
- The ability to convey the belief that the client is capable, trustworthy, respectable, worthy and dependable.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Counselor Interpersonal Dimensions that Affect Positive Counseling Outcomes (continued)

- Demonstration of a positive belief in himself or herself as a counselor and demonstration of positive self-esteem.
- Has self-awareness and knows his or her own biases or prejudices (good or bad) and is able to analyze his or her own feelings.
- Is sensitive to cultural differences.
- Has tolerance for ambiguity.



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Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Counselor Interpersonal Dimensions that Affect Positive Counseling Outcomes (continued)

- Has the ability to model appropriate behaviors.
- Has the ability to be altruistic.
- Is ethical.
- Ability to use oneself as a vehicle of change.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Counselor Interpersonal Dimensions that Affect Positive Counseling Outcomes (continued)

- Is committed to understanding specialized knowledge of the field and find it personally meaningful.
- Stays current in professional knowledge by continuing to learn.
- Respects the client's worldview, personal experience, spirituality, and culture.
- Has good self care strategies.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Characteristics of the Self-Actualizing Person

- He or she can tolerate doubt, uncertainty and ambiguity and can recognize the phony and dishonest.
- He or she is honest and genuine and accepts oneself as human with flaws and mistakes and recognizes others as human also.
- He or she has an internal source of motivation and drive and seeks growth instead of external approval.



Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Characteristics of the Self-Actualizing Person (continued)

- He or she is not ego-centered but chooses to help others out of concern for others and not for glorification of the self.
- He or she enjoys solitude and aloneness and is unaffected by the stress of others.
- He or she derives happiness from growth and internal rewards and not external needs for recognition.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Characteristics of the Self-Actualizing Person (continued)

- He or she has wonder about the world.
- He or she has deep feelings of empathy and compassion for others.
- He or she has deep, meaningful interpersonal relationships.
- He or she is not racist and does not discriminate against others who are different from himself or herself.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Characteristics of the Self-Actualizing Person (continued)

- He or she is highly ethical.
- He or she has a good sense of humor that is not hurtful towards others.
- He or she has a unique creativeness all his or her own.
- He or she is involved in causes outside of himself or herself.

Characteristics of the Effective Counselor

Additional Characteristics of Counselors

- Counselors need a high level of energy to remain alert and attentive to their clients.
- Counselors take risks everyday and face rejection by their clients or face clients or situations they may not be prepared to face.
- Counselors face ambiguity all the time and need to be able to handle it.
- Counselors are expected to develop intimate relationships with their clients as clients will share deeply personal and meaningful material with the counselor.