

# Eight Stages of Learning Motivational Interviewing

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| <b>1</b> | <b>Overview Spirit of MI</b>                   | Openness to a way of thinking and working that is collaborative rather than prescriptive, honors the client’s autonomy and self-direction, and is more about evoking than installing. This involves at least a willingness to suspend an authoritarian role, and to explore client capacity rather than incapacity, with a genuine interest in the client’s experiences and perspectives. |
| <b>2</b> | <b>OARS: Client-Centered Counseling Skills</b> | Proficiency in client-centered counseling skills to provide a supportive and facilitative atmosphere in which clients can safely explore their experience and ambivalence. This involves the comfortable practice of open-ended questions, affirmation, summaries, and particular the skill of accurate empathy as described by Carl Rogers.  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Recognizing Change Talk and Resistance</b>  | Ability to identify client “change talk” and commitment language that signals movement in the direction of behavior change, as well as client resistance. Change talk includes desire, ability, reasons, need and commitment to change, and steps taken toward change.  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Eliciting and Strengthening Change Talk</b> | Ability to evoke and reinforce client change talk and commitment language. Here the client-centered OARS skills are applied strategically, to differentially reinforce change talk and commitment.  |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Rolling with Resistance</b>                 | Ability to respond to client resistance in a manner that reflects and respects without reinforcing it. The essence is to roll with rather than opposing resistance.   |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Developing a Change Plan</b>                | Ability to recognize client readiness, and to negotiate a specific change plan that is acceptable and appropriate to the client. This involves timing as well as negotiation.   |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Consolidating Commitment</b>                | Ability to elicit increasing strength of client commitment to change, and to specific implementation intentions.  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Transition and Blending</b>                 | Ability to blend an MI style with the other intervention methods and to transition flexibly between MI and other approaches.  |

Source: Adapted from MINT TNT Resources for Trainers, [www.motivationalinterview.org](http://www.motivationalinterview.org)