

COMPETENCY:

Responding to Prosocial and Noncompliant Behavior

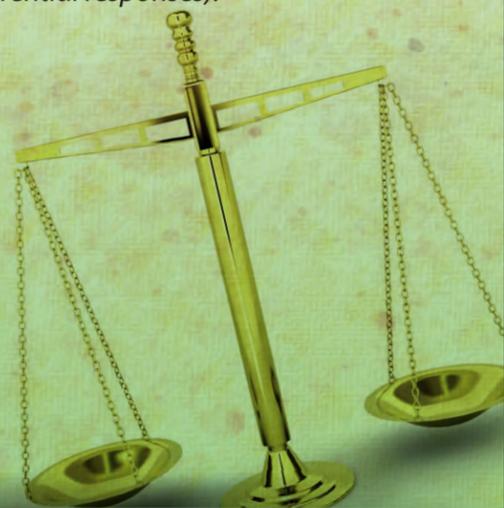
Research has demonstrated that rewards and incentives are a more effective way to shape behavior than responses to noncompliance (Molm, 1988). Specifically, the ratio of rewards and incentives to responses to noncompliance should be at least 4:1 and perhaps greater (Andrews & Bonta, 2006; Wodahl, Garland, Culhane, & McCarty, 2011).

Rewards are most effective when they are used consistently and frequently initially and tapered over time when the behavior becomes normalized (Skinner, 1974). To be effective, rewards should also be customized to the individual rather than using “one size fits all” approaches. Rewards can be tangible items, such as bus tokens, food or clothing, or intangible, such as verbal praise and affirmations. Incentives and rewards can also be the withdrawal of something perceived to be unpleasant (e.g., removal of curfew).

As with the use of rewards and incentives, there are ways to respond to acts of non-compliance that will maximize the effectiveness of the response. For sanctions—or responses to noncompliance—to be effective, they should follow several principles:

- *The certainty principle suggests that we should increase the likelihood that the behavior will elicit a response (Silvia, 2004).*
- *The consistency and neutrality principles suggest that responses should be perceived as fair, meaning that they are neither more harsh nor more lenient for similarly situated individuals (Singer, Seymour, O’Doherty, Stephan, Dolan, and Frith (2006).*
- *The parsimony and proportionality principles suggest that the severity of the response should be no more severe than the behavior warrants (Pogarsky, 2002).*
- *The responsivity principle suggests that each offender has different traits that will likely compel him or her to react differently to selected responses at different times (see Tittle and Botchkovar, 2005 for discussion regarding differential responses).*

- *The celerity principle suggests that we should reduce the time lapse between the behavior and the response as much as possible (Nagin and Pogarsky, 2003).*



PROFESSIONAL ALLIANCE

COMPETENCY:

Building Professional Alliance

The ability to establish meaningful relationships with offenders is perhaps the most important initial step in achieving risk reduction. If offenders do not trust or respect juvenile justice professionals, the potential benefit of interactions will be diminished. Juvenile justice professionals who have the interpersonal skills to develop rapport are much more likely to achieve the desired long-term results. There are 14 professional alliance traits—traits that can help staff develop rapport with the offenders with whom they work.

Research indicates that without developing rapport with offenders, staff are limited in their ability to impact lasting change. Juvenile justice professionals who possess effective relationship skills are able to reduce recidivism, increase treatment compliance, reduce violations, and improve outcomes (Asay & Lambert, 1999; Dowden & Andrews, 1999a; Dowden & Andrews, 1999b; Kennealy, Skeem, Manchak, & Eno Loudon, 2012; Skeem, Eno Loudon, Polascheck, & Cap, 2007).

In addition to these tangible results, staff report improved job satisfaction when they maintain an effective working relationship with the offenders with whom they work. Offenders also report increased satisfaction with the supervision process.

Core Professional Alliance Skills

- *Articulate*
- *Attentive*
- *Authentic*
- *Confident*
- *Empathetic*
- *Empowering*
- *Flexible*
- *Listens actively*
- *People-oriented*
- *Purposeful*
- *Reinforcing*
- *Respectful*
- *Sense of humor*
- *Strength-based*

THE 4 CORE COMPETENCIES FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS



COMPETENCY:

Using Skill Practice to Address Criminogenic Needs

There is mounting evidence that successfully challenges the notion that juvenile justice professionals cannot influence offender outcomes or have too little time to effect any real change in the offenders with whom they work. Recent studies suggest that incorporating evidence-based practices into the day-to-day interactions between juvenile justice professionals and offenders results in significant reduction of recidivism. These evidence-based practices include: adhering to the risk principle, focusing on criminogenic needs, discussing the risky situations offenders find themselves challenged with every day, adhering to the principle of responsivity (thereby helping individual offenders negotiate barriers to their success), adopting a humanistic approach that utilizes skills such as empathy and trust while maintaining professionalism and authority, as well as utilizing cognitive behavioral interventions. Studies have further demonstrated that the use of behavioral strategies, such as role-playing and practicing new behaviors (“skill practice”), are strongly correlated to

reductions in recidivism. The consistent use of these specific techniques produces the most significant positive outcomes among offenders.

Research related to effective offender interactions has the following implications for juvenile justice practice:

- *The content of interactions between juvenile justice professionals and offenders matters, regardless of the length of the interaction. However, better results are achieved when juvenile justice professionals spend approximately 20 minutes or more using cognitive behavioral interventions.*
- *Juvenile justice professionals can positively influence offenders by modeling prosocial skills, addressing antisocial attitudes and beliefs, and teaching new skills using cognitive behavioral methods, even within the context of brief appointments with offenders.*

COMPETENCY:

Effective Case Planning and Management

A growing body of research on evidence-based practices has provided juvenile justice professionals with the knowledge and skills to change offender behavior and reduce the likelihood of reoffense. Case management—which is gaining empirical support as an effective model for use with offenders—is a key strategy in the application of these evidence-based practices. Effective case management is characterized by a number of features.

For offenders, case plans are a roadmap to success. Like mapping out a journey from one location to another, case plan goals should be rooted in a clear under-

standing of the final destination offenders intend to reach; include specific steps to reaching these goals; and be accompanied by realistic timelines.

For the juvenile justice professional, case plans represent a deliberate strategy for addressing the issues that will lead offenders toward success. At a minimum, a case plan is a written document that describes offenders’ goals for the period of time they are involved with the juvenile justice system. What a case plan is not is a list of conditions or mandated actions the offender must follow.

Effective Case Management...

- *...is based on the assessment of risk and need.*
- *...is comprehensive, ongoing, and dynamic.*
- *...includes professional partners in a joint effort.*
- *...targets interventions to offenders’ individual needs.*
- *...results in a case plan that serves as a roadmap for success.*
- *...engages offenders in the process of change.*

