

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

CLOSED QUESTIONS - Closed questions are those readily answered by either "yes" or "no". They result in closed responses and generally yield little information about the client, because the counselor does more talking than the client. (Talk ratio = 90% counselor to 10% client)

The following are words to avoid in asking questions when you wish to learn about how your client is thinking, feeling, or behaving in this culture:

DID
HAVE
WERE
SHOULD
WOULD
ARE
WILL, etc.

OPEN QUESTIONS - Open questions are those which are not readily answered by one or two words. Rather, they allow the client to share as much as they are comfortable sharing about what they are thinking, feeling, or responding to a given question. Open questions are generally comprehensive questions and convey interest in the client's perceptions. They call for the client to do most of the talking. (Talk ratio = 20% counselor to 80% client)

The following words will assist in the generation of open responses from clients:

TELL ME ABOUT
WHAT
HOW
EXPLAIN TO ME..
WHY
DESCRIBE, etc.

REMEMBER - Aside from being a very astute observer of non-verbal communication, the only way you can find out about the client's thoughts, feelings and perceptions is when the client is doing the talking.