MICROMODULE SYLLABUS

Designing Your Own E-counselling Meeting

Introduction:

In this module, you have the opportunity to design and implement your own e-counselling session.

The aim of this learning task is

- to plan and implement a customer-oriented e-counselling meeting

Please read the provided instructions carefully to get the necessary information you need to complete the micromodule.

Task instructions:

- Read the PowerPoint presentation
- Choose a client. Your chosen client can be for example your colleague, friend or a spouse
- Plan an e-counselling meeting on a topic of your choice. The content is not important. The purpose is to practice online interaction and use of e-counselling tools. The interview can be conducted in any language.
- Consider what good online interaction is and how to create a safe space for your client throughout the e-counselling meeting
- You can meet your client for example in Zoom (free register and video meetings up to 40 minutes), Microsoft Teams etc.
- According to your possibilities record the e-counselling meeting. At least keep notes of the e-counselling meeting for yourself. Remember good ethical conduct.

- Reflect the meeting using the provided self-evaluation form.
- Ask feedback from your client using the client feedback form below.

PowerPoint presentation "Planning a successful e-counselling meeting" By Leena Hinkkanen: Planning e-counselling meeting.pptx

PLANNING A
SUCCESSFUL
E-COUNSELLING
MEETING

IN THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT, VARIOUS TYPES OF
INTERACTIONS CAN BE CARRIED OUT, SUCH AS:

- Individual counselling
- Small group counselling
- Peer counselling
- Informational events such as webinars
- A successful online interaction has a beginning, middle, and end. Planning and preparation are crucial for online interactions, requiring more prearranged setup compared to face-to-face meetings. This is particularly important to ensure that the client has a safe and pleasant experience in the online encounter.

STARTING THE MEETING

- When choosing the tool, it's advisable to start with the objective of the counsel activity and determine the actions and interactions required to achieve that objective. At the beginning of the session, it's good to go through the basics of the operating environment with the participants: how the program works, what can be done through it, and what tools are available (e.g., referencing tool, chat, etc.). If the conversation is recorded, ensure that the participants are aware of it. Additionally, it might be necessary to review privacy-related practices.

- In preparing for e-counsel, consider the possibility of technical challenges, so it's important to test the technical equipment and familiarize yourself with them in advance and have a contingency plan. It's also advisable to instruct the client to ensure the functionality of their own devices and to be in a quiet location. In a group e-counselling situation, it's a good practice to discuss the ground rules well in advance. It's sensible to set the mobile phone to silent mode at the beginning of the interaction.

- The interaction begins with an introduction, and in a situation conducted through video conferencing, it's beneficial to have the participants' video displayed to incorporate non-verbal communication.

- Friendliness and politeness should be remembered when encountering others online. For instance, it is more pleasant to join an online discussion when others acknowledge a new participant, greet them, and welcome them. Besides providing instructions, the instructor can teach such behavior by setting an example.

- E-counsel also allows for participation anonymously, which is not possible in face-to-face interactions. For example, in challenging life situations where one might fear the reaction or sanctions of another person, it might be easier to discuss matters anonymously through the internet. On the other hand, anonymity can make it easy to disregard the other party and behave in a way that one wouldn't behave using their real name.

PROGRESSION OF THE MEETING

- Especially when operating in a group through video conferencing, it is beneficial to establish a discussion culture where a turn begins with an introduction (who is speaking) and ends clearly, for instance, by saying 'thank you, that's all.' During video conferencing discussions, it might be easier to tolerate silence compared to a phone call. Tolerating silence is important to give the client time to think, and one should not be too eager to fill the silence, for example, with follow-up questions. Tolerating silence during the e-counsel discussion is a crucial part of creating an unhurried conversational atmosphere.

- If it seems that a participant is taking up too much space with their speaking turns during the e-counsel situation, it may be appropriate to instruct in advance on how long each participant can use their speaking turn on a particular topic at most and to adhere to these rules for all the counseled individuals. It is also a good practice to agree on the procedure for requesting new speaking turns in this context.

MAINTAINING MOTIVATION

- When e-counselling, it's important to remember that others don't know what's happening on your screen and in your environment unless you tell them. Therefore, it's advisable to start with the idea that everything the professional does in e-counselling should be stated out loud or written down for the client to see. Communicating one's actions in this way enhances the sense of presence in the e-counselling.

- In online discussions, a challenge for the professional is to maintain the participants' motivation and ensure that all participants are acknowledged. Active participation from the participants and utilizing a sense of community in online discussions can contribute to increasing motivation. It's important to assess the reasons for the client seeking counselling and their expectations for the e-counsel. Defining the goal of the e-counselling together keeps both parties motivated to work towards achieving it.

FINDING COMMON GROUND

- In e-counselling, neither party, the professional nor the client, may necessarily see each other's immediate reactions to what is said, which can be both a positive and a negative aspect. Since nonverbal cues in many e-counsel tools are more limited compared to face-to-face communication, it's essential to pay special attention to ensuring common understanding. It's a good practice to document the key points of the discussion and agreed-upon actions visibly for everyone.

- During e-counselling, it's beneficial to observe one's own thought processes. If you catch yourself making assumptions or having preconceived attitudes, it's advisable to confirm with the client whether you have understood correctly and if the impression you've formed holds true.

AT THE END OF THE SESSION

- In the final phase of e-counsel, it's good to recap what has been discussed and what conclusions have been reached so far. If the client has any unclear points or questions remaining, it's appropriate to address them at this stage.

- Furthermore, it's essential to summarize what has been agreed upon regarding the next steps during the discussion: what is expected from the professional and the client, from where, how, and when the client can seek further e-counsel if needed. Notes recorded visibly during the discussion serve as helpful tools in this regard.

AT THE END OF
THE SESSION

- The discussion can also be recorded for future reference. However, it's crucial to always ensure that the client is aware of the recording, knows who can access the recording, and is comfortable with the recording based on this information.

- Conclude the discussion gracefully with a thank-you to the client for participating in the e-counselling. Targeted encouragement also helps in building a positive e-counselling relationship. This encouragement can include praise for how the client acted during the discussion or what methods they have shown that, in your opinion, will help them achieve their future goals.

- Sources:

- Verkko-ohjaaja
  OPAS OHJAUKSEEN SEKÄ TIETO- JA NEUVONTATYÖHÖN VERKOSSA
  Toim. Tomi Guttorm, Timo Hakkarainen, Anna Kolehmainen, Kati Mäenpää, Sara Peltola ja Hanna Ylönen

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E-COUNSELLING, SELF-EVALUATION
Mark with x if it was achieved/not achieved

	Assessment Target	Achieved	Not achieved
Sote 24/7 Peda			
Technical devices	The technical devices were tested before starting		
	The technical devices worked well during the meeting		
	I had a backup plan		
	The phone was set to silent before starting		
	The recording of the meeting was agreed upon with the client		
Environment	The environment was quiet, and the acoustics were good		
	The lighting was sufficient and came from an appropriate direction		
	I had an ergonomic working posture		
Starting the e-counselling	The situation was initiated with an introduction		
	We agreed on common ground rules		
	The objective of the meeting was defined together		
During the e-counselling	I maintained the client's motivation		
	I gave the client thinking time		
	I spoke clearly and did not interrupt the client		
Ending the e-counselling	I summarized the counselling		
	I ensured that we had a mutual understanding of matters		
	I believe I succeeded well in the e-counselling		

CLIENT FEEDBACK
Mark with x if it was achieved/not achieved

	Assessment Target	Achieved	Not achieved
Technical devices	The technical devices worked well during the e-counselling		
	I was provided with sufficient information on how the program works and what tools are available		
	The recording of the e-counselling was agreed upon with me		
Environment	The environment was quiet, and the acoustics were good		
	The lighting was sufficient and came from an appropriate direction		
Security	I was informed about data privacy		
Atmosphere	The atmosphere was pleasant and unhurried in the situation		
	The professional's speech was clear, and they did not interrupt me		
	The professional used familiar vocabulary to me		
	The professional gave me time to reflect on things		
	I had the feeling that the professional was present in the situation		

Ending the e-counselling	There was a mutual understanding of the situation between me and the professional		
	I know where and when I can get more information about the matter		
	I had a safe and pleasant experience		

Nice to know material:

Interprofessional work in development communities Toolbox. SotePeda 24/7.

Interprofessional_work_in_development_communities_Toolbox.pdf (sotepeda247.fi)