

Sierra Leone Community Case Management Program
From CBD to Peer Supervisor: A Five-Day Workshop

Building Communication Skills

To be supportive, peer supervisors have to use effective communication skills. Those skills are similar to the communication skills used in counseling clients. Both supportive supervision and counseling seek to create trust and establish a spirit of cooperation.

Supportive supervisors use these communication techniques:

- Active listening
- Body language
- Verbal and nonverbal encouragement
- Open-ended questions
- Clarification

Active Listening

- Active listening is listening to another person in a way that communicates understanding, empathy, and interest:
 - It is different from just hearing.
 - It requires energy, skills, and commitment.
 - It makes the speaker feel important, acknowledged, and empowered.
- One way to listen actively is to re-state what the person said, but in different words. This shows that you are paying attention **and** understanding. It encourages the speaker to continue.

Examples of re-stating

- Statement: Are you calling again for a meeting to discuss sanitation? How many times can we discuss the same issues?
 - Re-statement: It sounds like you feel there has been too much talk about toilets.
- Statement: We really did not expect the level of changes that had happened.
 - Re-statement: So, you saw more changes than you thought you would.

Guidelines for Re-Stating

1. Listen to the speaker's basic message.
2. Give the speaker a simple summary of what you believe is the message. Do not add any new ideas.
3. Look for a sign or response that confirms or denies the correctness of your re-statement.
4. Do not restate negative statements that people make about themselves in a way that confirms this perception. If someone says, "I really acted foolishly in this situation," it is not good to say, "So, you feel foolish."

- 5. Restate once in a while, not often. You want to encourage the person to continue speaking, and constant interruption to re-state what they are saying might discourage them. Try to re-state only when the speaker hesitates or stops speaking.

Dos and Don'ts of Active Listening

Do	Don't
Concentrate on what the speaker is saying.	Do not do other things (for example, look through papers) when the speaker is talking. Do not daydream or get distracted by surrounding events.
Allow the speaker to express himself or herself.	Do not interrupt. Do not finish the speaker's sentences.
Allow the speaker to control the conversation.	Do not ask questions that change the subject.
Accept the speaker's opinion as valid.	Do not contradict, criticize, or judge.
Pay attention not only to the words, but also to gestures and behavior.	Do not anticipate what the speaker is going to say next. Do not ignore the emotional context.
Prevent emotions from getting in the way of active listening no matter what the speaker is saying.	Do not become angry, defensive, or upset.

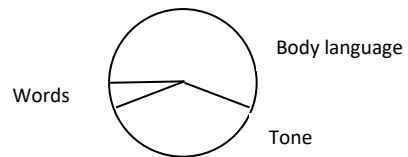
Adapted from: Harper, A., & Harper, B. 1996. Team barriers: Action for overcoming the blocks to empowerment involvement and high performance. New York: MW Corporation.

Body Language

- Use of body language means the use of facial expression, posture of the body, the position of the arms, legs, eyes, etc., as well as gestures, space, and seating.
- Researchers have shown that what we call "body language" says more than our words or our tone of voice as a way to communicate. *More than half of what people "hear" from us has nothing to do with our words!*

Three Parts of Interaction between People

- When you communicate, three things are important. Body language has the most impact on the other person. Words have the least impact.
 - Body language – most
 - Tone of voice – some
 - Actual words – very little



Body language that might be encouraging:

- Looking the speaker in the eye
- Leaning toward the speaker
- Sitting next to the speaker
- Sitting close to the speaker

- Matching the speaker's facial expressions (frowning when speaker frowns, etc.)

Verbal and Nonverbal Encouragement

- Verbal and nonverbal encouragement use words, phrases, and gestures to show that you are paying attention and want the person to keep talking.

Some examples of verbal encouragement include:

- "I see"
- "I understand"
- "I get you"
- "That is clear"

Some examples of nonverbal encouragement include:

- Nodding your head
- Smiling when the speaker smiles
- Frowning when the speaker frowns

Open-Ended Questions

- Open-ended questions are the questions that cannot be answered with one word (i.e., "yes" or "no"). If you encourage CBDs to explain a situation in more detail, you will have a better understanding of the issue and be able to help them better. Usually, open-ended questions start with such words as "how," "why," and "what".

Examples of open-ended questions

1. What questions do you have?
2. What problems have you noticed with the drug distribution system?
3. Why do you think CBD morale is low?
4. How often do you think that supervisory visits should take place?
5. What do you think of the amount of time clients are waiting to be helped?

Clarification

- Clarification is asking questions in order to better understand what the speaker said. The purpose of clarification is to ensure that you understand what the person is saying.

Some guidelines on clarification:

1. Admit that you do not understand exactly what the person is telling you.
2. Re-state the message as you understand it, asking if your interpretation is correct. Use phrases such as "Do you mean that...?" or "Are you saying that...?"
3. Do not over-use clarification. People might resent being interrupted if it happens too often.

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Advice for One-on-One Training

To teach or train, you must know how to transfer knowledge and transfer skills. Knowing how to do a thing does not mean that you will know how to teach someone else how to do it.

To help CBDs improve their skills or learn new skills, Peer Supervisors must:

- Be balanced – have 2-way communication with the CBD, instead of doing all of the talking
- Be respectful – show that you value and fully accept the CBD
- Be aware of what the CBD already knows and can do – people often do not like to be told or “taught” what they already know.
- Help motivate the CBD to learn – get his/her true commitment to learning the new skill
- Be practical – teach what they really need to know to do their CBD work well
- Model the skill – demonstrate and explain the new skill; allow CBD to ask questions
- Watch the CBD practice the skill – encourage the CBD to try it as many times as it takes to become good at it
- Provide constructive feedback – comment on what you can actually observe, and in a way that is respectful and helpful
- Be patient – people learn different things at different speeds; if you want the CBD to learn, you have to give him or her the time they need
- _____
- _____
- _____

Tips for Building Relationships and Resolving Conflicts

CBD Peer Supervisors must work with lots of people: their community, CBDs, the communities and community leaders of the CBDs they supervise, clinic staff, CCM staff, and perhaps even the DHMT. Having positive, productive relationships with all of them will make the Peer Supervisor's work easier. Even more importantly, it will help the program be more effective in saving children's lives.

Here are some key elements of a positive working relationship:

- Mutual respect
- Being fairly clear about own perspective, needs, goals
- Having a common goal or objective
- Acknowledging and at least trying to understand the other person's point of view, even you disagree
- Transparency
- Wanting the other (or the other program) to succeed as well
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- _____

To identify and solve problems with colleagues and partners:

- Pay attention – try to be aware of what is said **and** what body language and the situation are telling you.
- Ask questions. Do not assume that you know what all the issues are.
- Know what you want and consider what you would be willing to give up.
- Try to truly understand what the other person wants and why he or she is behaving the way he or she is behaving.
- Involve others who need to be involved—do not feel you have to do everything on your own.
- Think creatively about possible solutions.
- Think “win-win”. Are there ways that both individuals or programs can win? There does not have to be a loser in every argument or disagreement.



<http://farmlandgrab.org/2915> (original source might be Reuters)

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Thoughts on the Puzzle Exercise

Think about your experiences as a teacher and a learner. In the middle boxes, write down what you noticed or felt during the puzzle exercise. Then think about whether you have had similar thoughts or noticed similar things as a CBD or in any other work.

	Thoughts/feelings during puzzle exercise	Similarities in CBD or other work
As the teacher		
As the learner		

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From CBD to CBD Peer Supervisor: Next Steps

Here are some ideas for helping you get started in your new role as a CBD Peer Supervisor.

- Inform the chief or other local official that you have come from the training workshop.
- Attend the next monthly CBD meeting. At this meeting:
 - Inform, or let the CCM Officer inform, the CBDs that you have completed peer supervisor training and will now take on some of the roles the CCM Officer used to play.
 - Tell them that you will now be their supervisor and you plan to visit them every month to see how they are doing and what kind of help you might need.
 - Feel free also to tell them about the training you completed—what you learned, what you did.
 - Also tell them you will continue to provide CCM in your community. That is, you will continue to welcome caregivers and their under-fives in your home and give advice, treatment, and referrals.
- Tell your community leaders that you have added to your CBD role, becoming the supervisor for up to 16 other CBDs in the catchment area.
- Develop a good relationship with the clinic staff (or improve an already-good relationship).
- Continue to always show discipline and professionalism.
- Be a good leader for your team of CBDs
- Start planning and scheduling your supervision visits.
- Involve your supervisors (the in-charge and the CCM Officer) in resolving problems that you cannot resolve alone.
- Always feel free to communicate with the IRC team about problems or misunderstandings.
- Attend the monthly CBD meeting regularly.
- Collect the CBD registers on time every month.
- Submit your reports on time every month.
- IRC reserves the right to dismiss any CBD or CBD Peer Supervisor and ask the community to choose a new CBD.
- If you cannot continue as a CBD or Peer Supervisor, tell the chief or other local authority and return your CBD box and supplies to the CCM Officer.