

Traits of an Effective Counselor

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Traits of an Effective Counselor

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Counselors are mental health professionals who provide counseling to individuals facing psychological problems and life stress. For them to be effective in their tasks, they have to possess certain traits. Before embarking in the counseling career, one needs to have good communication skills since the tasks involve talking to the patients. Counselors need to possess this trait naturally and have the ability to listen to the people they are counseling. Additionally, expressing the ideas and thoughts to others is another communicative trait that can only be obtained naturally. This is to say that communication skills cannot be learned, but it should come naturally (Gutierrez & Mullen, 2016).

Further, acceptance and being nonjudgmental is another trait that counselors should possess to ensure they carry out their job effectively. This entails accepting the client regardless of their current situation and being open to listening to their problems. In addition, counselors must show empathy towards their clients and make them feel understood. This involves the ability to be in someone else's shoes and understanding the problem from their perspective. This is something that a person can learn through the course of their career. Self-awareness is another trait that a counselor should have since their job involves helping others. Being aware of one's self prevents them from inflicting their problems on others (Jackson & Thompson, 1971).

In the list of traits analyzed above, self-awareness is one characteristic that surprised me. Since the counseling career involves helping people with psychological problems, I did not think that the counselors should worry about themselves. Strengthening my traits would involve interacting with people and learning to communicate effectively since the tasks include talking to people. Also, some of the characteristics like self-awareness would involve self-assessment and find out about the issues that I face. Some of the traits can only be practiced and improved.

1
According to the Myers-Briggs type indicator (MBTI) personality test, I am 8% introverted, 11% sensing, 33% feeling and 28% perceiving. I was satisfied with my results since it shows that I am 8% introvert. This is a good percentage considering that I am a counselor. It shows that I am not shy and I can handle different situations without showing reluctance. Also, it indicated that I am perceiving which shows that I am aware of myself. This will inhibit me from inflicting my problems on others.

Response

Ivette Marquez

I did not think that humor is one of the traits. The ability to make someone laugh is a naturally developed trait since you cannot learn it in the course of the career. The fact that happy people tend to show more empathy for others is new information for me. I think humor also helps ease the situation by making the client comfortable. Also, I think your desire to try something new when interacting with a client is a good thing instead of being constrained by the norms of the career. It will require courage to be able to explore new methods of handling mentally disordered persons.

Response

I tend to disagree with you that all the traits are not innate and can be learned. Considering some of the traits like humor, it is hard to develop those traits by merely taking lessons in the course of the career. However, commitment is the key to ensuring that the tasks are carried out effectively. Being committed helps a counselor learn new things on their clients and find out whether they are effective. Also, you mentioned about being honest with oneself which is a good way to self-awareness. I think knowing about yourself is a good point to start to conduct self-improvement.

Response

I also, do not think that the results you obtained from the tests are accurate. Retaking the test might be a good way of ensuring accuracy. Being 9% introvert is, however, a good sign since it shows that you are not shy. I think you should take the test over again and find out which traits you need to improve on.

Reference

Jackson, M., & Thompson, C. L. (1971). Effective counselor: Characteristics and attitudes.

Journal of Counseling Psychology, 18(3), 249.

Gutierrez, D., & Mullen, P. R. (2016). Emotional intelligence and the counselor: Examining the relationship of trait emotional intelligence to counselor burnout. *Journal of Mental*

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