



# Information and Assistance Supervisor Observation and Support Tool Guide

## General guidance:

This guide is designed to accompany the [F-02860 Information and Assistance Supervisor Observation and Support Tool](#) and is to be used while observing the service of information and assistance. Use of this guide and tool are not required but encouraged to ensure good customer service and consistency amongst staff.

The guide and tool follow the structure of information and assistance. Each section outlines key competencies that should occur during that portion of the conversation with the customer. Customer conversations don't happen in a linear fashion. Supervisors who use the tool may need to take notes as they observe the conversation and complete sections as they occur naturally.

## Reviewer Guidance:

Generally, supervisors should begin by reviewing the ADRC staff member's performance in light of the Level 2 guidelines.

- If the ADRC staff member's performance appears to exceed the Level 2 guidelines, review the guidelines for Level 3.
- If the ADRC staff member's performance does not appear to meet the Level 2 guidelines, review the guidelines for Level 1.
- If the ADRC staff member's performance appears to be between two numbers (for example, a 1.5), round down. This is not to penalize ADRC staff, but to offer the most opportunities for improvement.

## Evaluation:

When evaluating the staff's performance, supervisors should review any competency that received a score of Level 1 (Below Requirement). If a staff person received a Level 1 score for one or more competencies on the observation and support tool, then supervisors should meet with staff to discuss the areas where the competencies were not met. Supervisors may also assign one or more of the following tasks to increase staff understanding about information and assistance:

- Staff review the Information and Assistance training module.
- Staff shadow a colleague who has met competencies during a prior observation in order to observe an information and assistance contact while using the observation tool. Staff may use the tool during the observation to "check off" when they see components occurring; this process provides an opportunity for recognition of what each step looks like.

Completion of the assigned tasks should occur within a time frame determined by the supervisor, not to exceed four weeks. Upon staff completion of the assigned task(s), the supervisor should complete another observation or record review to ensure that the staff now meets expectations for competency. It is not necessary to provide documentation regarding the completion of the assigned tasks to the Office for Resource Center Development.

**Observation Script:**

This optional script may be used to request permission for another person to observe your call or meeting.

“Part of our ADRC’s quality assurance includes having one of my colleagues or a supervisor observe me during a call/office visit periodically. This helps ensure that I am providing quality services. Are you comfortable with (name of the person) listening in/observing our meeting? If not, please let me know. I respect your decision and want you to feel as comfortable as possible during our meeting.”

Overall	Reviewer Guidance
Remain sensitive to cultural differences.	(1) The staff member does not attend to possible cultural issues or behaves in a biased manner towards a customer’s culture. (2) The staff member attempts to take customer’s culture into account. The staff member may lack the skills and understanding to adapt approach to meet needs of diverse populations. (3) The staff member actively inquires about issues of culture and works to incorporate cultural strengths into service plan.
Ask about and use communication supports and assistive devices as needed.	(1) The staff member does not ask customer about, or ignores obvious need for, communication supports and/or assistive devices. (2) The staff member asks about and uses communication supports and/or assistive devices when needed. The staff member may need guidance on proper use of devices. (3) The staff member asks about and displays knowledge of and comfort with using communication supports and assistive devices.

<p>Use appropriate non-verbal communication</p> <p>(Although the contact may occur over the phone, non-verbal communication may be perceived.)</p>	<p>(1) The staff member non-verbal communication toward customer is not warm, open, or friendly. The staff member may hinder rapport building.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses warm, open, and friendly non-verbal communication. The staff member often responds appropriately to customer’s non-verbal communication.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses warm, open, and friendly non-verbal communication. The staff member consistently attends to and responds appropriately to customer’s non-verbal communication. The staff member uses non-verbal communication to enhance and support verbal communication.</p>
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<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Offer a warm and inviting professional greeting.	<p>(1) The staff member does not greet customer or greets customer in a manner that is not warm, inviting, or professional.</p> <p>(2) The staff member provides greeting that is warm, inviting, and professional.</p> <p>(3) The staff member provides greeting that is warm, inviting, and professional. The staff member’s posture and facial expressions signal openness and positive attitude. The staff member offers affirmation or reassurance that customer has taken a positive step in contacting the ADRC.</p>
Introduce self, role, and function of the ADRC.	<p>(1) The staff member does not introduce self, explain role, or discuss function of the ADRC.</p> <p>(2) The staff member introduces self, explains role, and discusses the role of the ADRC. Introduction may seem generic or “scripted.”</p> <p>(3) The staff member introduces self, explains role, and discusses the role of the ADRC. The staff member includes a clear statement that emphasizes the customer’s personal autonomy.</p>
Explain confidentiality.	<p>(1) The staff member does not explain confidentiality, or provides information that is unclear or incorrect.</p> <p>(2) The staff member explains confidentiality clearly and accurately. The staff member does not inquire about customer’s understanding or additional questions, or inquires superficially using closed-ended questions. (Example: “Do you have any questions?”)</p> <p>(3) The staff member explains confidentiality clearly and accurately. The staff member follows up with customer to assure understanding and probes for additional questions using open-ended questions. (Example: “What questions do you have about this?”)</p>

<b>Discovery, Identifying Need, and Providing Assistance</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Obtain information on customer's concerns and needs.	<p>(1) The staff member does not provide customer an opportunity to openly share their concerns. The staff member may behave as if customer's needs are already known. The staff member obtains information about customer's needs using only closed-ended questions or a checklist of needs.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ask about customer's needs and concerns. The staff member maintains focus on the customer's perspective for the majority of the discussion of concerns and needs.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses primarily open-ended questions and reflective listening to facilitate a discussion about customer's concerns. The staff member uses some closed-ended questions for specific details or as an adaptation if customer appears to find the open-ended questioning a challenge.</p>
Recognize customer's characteristics or situations where options counseling would be beneficial.	<p>(1) The staff member fails to recognize situations when options counseling might be of benefit, or provides options counseling when there is no indication of its potential benefit.</p> <p>(2) The staff member accurately recognizes situations when options counseling might be of benefit. The staff member appropriately seeks out supervisor support if unsure. <i>If customer's needs do not meet criteria for options counseling, score as Meets Requirement (2).</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member accurately recognizes situations when options counseling might be of benefit and consistently navigates less clear situations appropriately with minimal or no support from supervisor or peers.</p>
Ascertain customer's willingness to engage in options counseling, if applicable.	<p>(1) The staff member does not ask about customer's willingness to engage in options counseling or ignores signs that customer is not interested in options counseling.</p> <p>(2) The staff member asks customer about willingness to engage in options counseling. The staff member may miss non-verbal or other subtle indicators that customer has concerns about options counseling. <i>If options counseling not offered because customer's needs do not meet criteria for options counseling, score as Meets Requirement (2).</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member asks customer about willingness to engage in options counseling and consistently attends to non-verbal or other subtle indicators that customer has concerns about options counseling.</p>

<p>Identify resources that may meet customer-identified needs and preferences.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member provides information that does not appear to be tailored to customer’s specific needs and preferences.</p> <p>(2) The staff member provides information that is tailored to customer’s specific needs and preferences. Includes, at a minimum, a discussion of informal supports, privately funded services, and publicly funded services.</p> <p>(3) The staff member provides information that is tailored to customer’s specific needs and preferences. The staff member includes, at a minimum, a discussion of informal supports, privately funded services, and publicly funded services. If resources do not exist that directly meet both needs and preferences, or the customer is not interested in acting upon the information provided, the staff member explores creative solutions beyond traditional services.</p>
<p>Present information to customer in a manner that supports customer’s understanding.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member presents information in manner not adapted to customer’s communication needs. May use jargon, acronyms, and technical terms unfamiliar to customer without explanation. The staff member may provide unnecessary details and information. The staff member may deliver information at rapid pace with disregard to customer’s indications that they are confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member may fail to check for customer’s understanding.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses clear communication and plain language. The staff member makes effort to adapt communication to the individual customer. The staff member responds appropriately to clear signs that customer has become confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member checks for customer’s understanding at least once.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses clear communication and plain language. The staff member effectively adapts communication to the individual customer. The staff member normalizes that the information provided may be complex and confusing. The staff member proactively attends closely to customer’s communication to avoid customer becoming confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member checks for customer’s understanding at multiple points throughout the information sharing process.</p>

<p>Gauge customer's readiness to move forward or inquires about what additional information the customer may need.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member moves forward to providing information without regard to customer's readiness. May fail to gauge readiness, or may ignore obvious or subtle customer signals that they are not ready to move forward.</p> <p>(2) The staff member asks customer about readiness to move forward, or moves forward without asking only after customer makes explicit statements indicating readiness. The staff member does not force by providing information if customer is not ready.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses open-ended questions to inquire about customer's readiness to move forward. The staff member reflects and summarizes if customer makes explicit statements indicating readiness. If customer is not ready to move forward, the staff member asks open-ended questions to help further explore customer's timeline and additional needs to increase readiness for decision-making.</p>
<p>Establish a plan for follow-up, as applicable.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member does not recognize and/or does not offer follow-up when contact meets the requirements of the <a href="#">Follow-Up Policy</a>. The staff member does not recognize the customer's refusal to accept follow-up and proceeds with scheduling a follow-up contact.</p> <p>(2) The staff member offers follow-up as appropriate, according to the requirements of the <a href="#">Follow-Up Policy</a>.</p> <p>(3) The staff member explains to the customer the benefits of a follow-up contact and checks with the customer to make sure they understand. The staff member offers follow-up as appropriate, according to the requirements of the <a href="#">Follow-Up Policy</a>.</p>
<p><b>Follow-Up</b></p>	<p><b>Reviewer Guidance</b></p>
<p>Request update on customer's situation and inquire about customer's progress on planned action steps.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member does not ask about customer's situation or progress on any planned action steps.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses open-ended questions to ask for an update on customer's situation and progress on any planned action steps. <i>If customer declined follow-up evaluation on this component, score as Meets Requirement (2).</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member uses open-ended questions and reflective listening to engage customer in a discussion about their overall situation and progress on any planned action steps. The staff member provides positive affirmation on any progress.</p>

<p>Assess for the need for options counseling if the customer was unable to act on information previously provided, as needed.</p>	<p>(1) If customer’s circumstances have changed significantly or customer has not acted upon resources previously provided, then the staff member does not re-engage customer and does not assess for the need for options counseling.</p> <p>(2) If customer’s circumstances have changed significantly or customer has not acted upon resources previously provided, then the staff member re-engages customer to learn what barriers customer is experiencing and assesses for need for options counseling. The staff member discusses possible solutions to overcome barriers when there are obvious needs. <i>If re-engaging is not needed, customer declines to re-engage, or customer declined follow-up, then evaluation on this component should be recorded as Meets Requirement (2).</i></p> <p>(3) If customer’s circumstances have changed significantly or customer has not acted upon resources previously provided, then the staff member reflects on this observation and includes customer in decision to discuss barriers and/or need for options counseling. The staff member guides customer to take the lead on decisions about next steps.</p>
<p>Continue to schedule additional follow-up contacts or offer options counseling, or concludes follow-up, as appropriate.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member does not offer additional follow-up when it would benefit the customer, or does not conclude follow-up when customer’s goals have been achieved. The staff member may fail to discuss next steps with customer altogether, leaving customer unsure of what to expect next.</p> <p>(2) The staff member offers additional follow-up or concludes follow-up as appropriate. The staff member respects customer’s preference for timing of continued follow-up or conclusion of follow-up. <i>If customer declined initial or future follow-up, then evaluation on this component should be recorded as Meets Requirement (2).</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member offers additional follow-up or concludes follow-up as appropriate. The staff member respects customer’s preference for timing of continued follow-up or conclusion of follow-up. The staff member informs customer that the ADRC is available should future needs arise.</p>