

Stress-Free Pre-session Script

When interpreters and mental health practitioners develop a practice of on-going communication, it can ultimately lead to more effective treatment for mental health consumers. This template is designed to help you quickly organize your thoughts so you can express yourself clearly and confidently over the phone or face-to-face.

Introduce yourself and your title. State the obvious regarding your upcoming work together.

Example:

“Hi _____. My name is _____ and I’m a sign language interpreter. I understand that we will be working together on _____.”

Briefly, why do you think it would be good to talk with him/her? Example:

“I have found (heard) that it can be helpful for interpreters and therapists who are working together to check in once in a while. Do you have a moment to talk about how we might approach our upcoming work together?”

What are two or three things you would like to know about his/her work? Example:

1. “I’m curious, have you worked with sign language interpreters before?” (Had experience with Deaf people? How did it go? What worked and what didn’t?)
2. “Is there anything you can tell me about your approach to counseling (or this session) that could help me better align with your therapeutic goals?”
3. “I ask that once the session has begun, you don’t directly involve me in the conversation. I am comfortable interpreting *about* myself, however.”

What are two or three basic things you would like him/her to know about the goal and process of your work? Example:

1. “As a certified interpreter, my role is to facilitate communication between you and _____ including what I perceive to be the nuances of the communication...”
2. “Because of my familiarity with the cultural norms of this population, at times I will have information that might be useful to you. If you’d like we could talk after the appointment.”
3. “Occasionally, there will be times when I might not completely understand the message I’m seeing. Since I want to respect your right to control the process of therapy, I will let you know what I’ve missed - so you can decide to interrupt or not.”

Express your appreciation for his/her time. State your intention to have an effective working relationship. Example:

“Thank you so much for your time, _____. I’m really looking forward to meeting you and working with you in service of our mutual client.”

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What are two or three things you would like to know about his/her work:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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