



U.S. Department of Labor
National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center
Practical Applications for Motivational Interviewing
Community of Practice Session
Thursday, May 26, 2022, 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET



Key Speakers:

Steve Dudasik, Coach
Jennifer Steigerwald, Coach

Key Points:

- **Overview of Five Stages of Change**
 - Pre-contemplation
 - Contemplation
 - Preparation
 - Action
 - Maintenance
- **Pre-contemplation**
 - Not considering a change or seeing it as an option
 - Employment not considered
 - *Motivational interviewing skill:* Encourage and explore
- **Contemplation**
 - Thinking about making a change but not sure about doing so
 - Seeing employment as a possible goal
 - *Motivational interviewing skill:* Active listening and proactive asking
- **Preparation**
 - Has defined intention to change and plans to do so
 - Wants to become employed and has established goals as a defined plan
 - *Motivational interviewing skill:* Guide and ask, move to action
- **Action**
 - Commits to making change (time and energy)
 - Follows plan to gain employment
 - *Motivational interviewing skill:* Inform, clarify the direction
- **Maintenance**
 - Continuous change made, consolidates success from it
 - Is employed and on a career path
 - *Motivational interviewing skill:* Support and advocacy
- **Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) providers work with veterans in the contemplation through maintenance stage**
 - Questions?
 - **Attendee Response:** Do you have suggestions to get people back on track after expressing problems they are facing?
 - **NVTAC Response:** Yes, always relate back to where they are in the change process and where they need to get to.
- **Role Play One: Contemplation**
 - The intention is to gain clarity about why the client is interested in work and to tip the scale to the pros if doing so.
 - Jenn is in a Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. She was referred to HVRP by her case manager as she expressed interest in working. This is her first meeting with Steve, an HVRP specialist:



U.S. Department of Labor
National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center
Practical Applications for Motivational Interviewing
Community of Practice Session
Thursday, May 26, 2022, 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET



Case Manager: Hi, Jenn. Welcome, I am Steve, and we will be working together. It is great to meet you.

Client: Hi, Steve.

Case Manager: I see that your SSVF case manager referred you because you were interested in finding work.

Client: Yes, she said that your program can help me with that.

Case Manager: Great. We work with veterans and support them to find and get a job that they like and have the skills for. What kind of work are you thinking about doing?

Client: Well, I was a cook and like that, but I am worried that no one will hire me since I have not worked in two years and became homeless.

Case Manager: Sounds like you are concerned that because of this you will not find work again, even if you put in the effort to get a job.

Client: That is true, I am worried about applying for jobs because I do not want to be rejected.

Case Manager: I hear you. It is hard to go to an interview and not get the job, many people feel that way, but we have been able to help them get work. We can talk about this more next time.

Client: I would like that. I do want to find work.

Case Manager: We can also talk about what you liked about being a chef and if this is something you want to do again.

Client: That would be good too.

Case Manager: Wonderful, I am excited to meet again next week and for our work together. We are here for you. Have a great day, Jenn.

Client: You too, Steve.

- Can you relate to this scenario or have any comments, discussions, or examples of working with a veteran in this stage?
 - **Attendee Response:** It is important to hear where the veteran is and what their work history is. Asking about criminal background and sex offenses can be particularly challenging. You can commiserate with the veteran and let them know their country



U.S. Department of Labor
National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center
Practical Applications for Motivational Interviewing
Community of Practice Session
Thursday, May 26, 2022, 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET



will be serving them by helping them to find employment. The key is to develop trust and to educate the veteran. You can also mention if you or a family member have served in the military to establish a connection.

- **Role Two: Preparation to Action**

- The intention is to guide the conversation and to ask questions that will move the client to action.
- Steve is an HVRP participant who has determined that he wants to work with computers and is excited about employment. He is meeting with Jenn who is an HVRP employment specialist:

Case Manager: Hi Steve, great to see you again.

Client: Hi Jenn.

Case Manager: Today I want to learn more about your goal of working with computers as we will need to narrow it down to start a job search. What do you mean by wanting to work with computers?

Client: In the Navy, I found that I was good with helping people having computer problems. They would come to me to fix their laptops.

Case Manager: What do you mean by fixing?

Client: If they could not open their computer or it was stuck, I would be able to figure out how to get it working again.

Case Manager: Wow, sounds like you may be a fit for computer help desk work.

Client: What is that?

Case Manager: Computer help desk workers take calls from people and solve their issues to get their computers running again.

Client: I can see myself doing that, but I do not have a college degree.

Case Manager: That may or may not be a challenge for you to get work at a help desk.

Client: What do you suggest?

Case Manager: I would like to give you some homework to read about computer help desk jobs and what is required.

Client: Great.

Case Manager: Okay, here is a list of a few sites where you can investigate help desk work. At our next meeting we can talk about what you learned and if it is practical, and start thinking about possible training, apprenticeship, or job search opportunities. If it is not, we can explore other options that involve some kind of computer support work.

Client: I am excited!

Case Manager: Me too. I am confident that we will come up with a great job goal for you and a plan to get it.

Client: Thanks, see you next week.

Case Manager: Looking forward to it, have a great day, Steve.

- Can you relate to this scenario or have any comments, discussions, or examples of working with a veteran in this stage?
 - **Attendee Response:** It is important to determine what the veteran wants to do and go from there. Currently, there are a lot of openings, so placement for jobs is easier. Already having key contacts in place for referrals and partnering with agencies makes the process easier. Adjusting the veteran's job goals to what is available in the community is also helpful.
 - **Attendee Response:** We are still seeing a lot of insecurity due to COVID, so the coaching has become more poignant. COVID changed employment and the face of seeking employment.
- **Role Play Three: Maintenance**
 - The intention is to continue to support and advocate for the client using a strengths-based approach.
 - Jenn, an HVRP participant, has been working successfully for thirty days. Steve, HVRP employment specialist, is meeting with her:

Case Manager: Hi Jenn, great to see you and hear that you are doing so well in your job.

Client: Thank you Steve, I am feeling really good about my job so far.

Case Manager: What have you done to be successful?

Client: I have gotten to know my co-workers a little better and feel more comfortable with what my job tasks are.



U.S. Department of Labor
National Veterans' Technical Assistance Center
Practical Applications for Motivational Interviewing
Community of Practice Session
Thursday, May 26, 2022, 3:00–4:00 p.m. ET



Case Manager: The first thirty days on any job is often a challenge, so happy to hear that you are doing so well.

Client: My supervisor has been very supportive and feel that I can ask anyone for help if I need it.

Case Manager: Having that support at work is wonderful.

Client: It has been great for me.

Case Manager: That said, is there anything that is a challenge for you so far?

Client: Getting there in the morning is sometimes hard.

Case Manager: What are you doing to help with that?

Client: I have started to go to sleep earlier and set my alarm to wake me up ninety minutes before I have to leave. This gives me time to get going. Some days are better than others.

Case Manager: I hear you, I sometimes have that challenge too, but we are both working.

Client: Yes, I still make it in time.

Case Manager: Jenn, we will continue to touch base, remember that we are here to support you. You can call me anytime if you need to talk about work issues before it gets in the way of keeping your job.

Client: Thank you Steve.

Case Manager: Thank you Jenn, keep up the good work.

- It is very important to reassure the client that you are still there if they need more assistance. This technique can be used as a retention strategy and can help the veteran avoid getting fired.

- **Open Discussion/Comments**

- The following outlines open discussion after the presentation portion of the session:
 - **Attendee Response:** No matter what stage they are in, make sure you take time to take care of yourself as well to avoid burnout. If you are not helping the veteran, you may be hurting the veteran by being burnt out. We want to make sure we are always providing the best service to the veterans.

-
- **NVTAC Response:** The practice of Motivational Interviewing can help the case manager with self-care as well because we care so much, we can get burned out if we do not have tools to support us.
 - **Attendee Response:** In the maintenance stage, it is important to support our veterans with the soft skills necessary to achieve job satisfaction. Those items are not necessarily covered in the employee handbook but are critical to the human part of the employment.
 - **Attendee Response:** Be careful not to let your clients transfer their situation to you which can cause burnout.
 - **Attendee Response:** Sometimes Motivational Interviewing is good to use with clients who stay in the pre-contemplation stage for a long time. A veteran came for service in 2019, has an HVAC license, but had a substance abuse problem. He was introduced to seeking recovery so that he could be able to maintain employment. Finally, the veteran was ready to go to treatment in 2022 but had trouble finding veteran long-term care. The veteran got into a hotel until he was able to get into long-term treatment. Keep asking open-ended questions to get a veteran to the next stage of change with unconditional positive regard. It is our responsibility as case workers to help move the clients from one stage to the other. We have the tools, and the clients may not.
 - **NVTAC Response:** Motivational Interviewing is about unconditional positive regard because we should be honored to serve our clients.
- **Conclusion**
 - NVTAC thanked the participants for their input and reminded attendees that they can direct all questions or requests for technical assistance to contact@nvtac.org.
 - A survey link was put in the chat and participants were asked to complete the survey to provide feedback on the session.
 - The Community of Practice sessions will be canceled for the months of June and July. We are excited to start back up again in August and will announce what those topics will be closer to the sessions.