

The Integral Role Motivational Interviewing Plays in the Achievement of Performance

Excellence and Overall Well-being

Camille Powell

University of Western States

LEAD 6335 / LEAD 7140 Positive Coaching

Dr. Nicole Detling

Introduction

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a collaborative, goal-oriented approach to conversation to strengthen an individual's motivations and commitments to change, by eliciting and exploring a person's own desires, abilities, reasons, and needs to change with an atmosphere of acceptance and compassion (Rosengren, 2018). MI is a person-centered approach and collaborative approach to conversation that effectively addresses the natural occurrence of ambivalence (Rollnick, et al., 2020). MI involves mitigating the righting reflex that can cause more resistance to change (Rollnick, et al., 2020). MI is ultimately about inspiring and retrieving the wisdom, experiences, and insight from within the individual increasing intrinsic motivations, resulting in greater commitment and change (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

There are three primary communication tools in motivational interviewing: Directing style, is communication in the form of advice or a plan of action; following style, follows the client's lead as the client explores an area; and guiding, where the client and practitioner "walk" together, while the practitioner provides options and guidance, serving as a resource as the client gather's their own information (Rosengren, 2018). Readiness for change is a significant factor that plays a role an individual's progress towards a particular change (Rosengren, 2018). Therefore, it is integral to move through the following processes to support effective change.

It is important to utilize the processes of engaging, focusing, evoking, and planning. Engaging is establishing a safe place within which the client can explore difficult realities and a working relationship (Rosengren, 2018). Focusing is coming to understand what matters most to the client and defining an agenda for moving forward (Rosengren, 2018). Evoking is calling forth the client's reasons for changing and reaching a commitment to action (Rosengren, 2018). Planning is putting into place the methods by which the client will act on this commitment

(Rosengren, 2018). The following are the foundations of Motivational-Interviewing that can result in lasting change:

- **MI Spirit, OARS + I, and eliciting change talk** (Rosengren, 2018).
- **Motivational Interviewing Spirit:**
 - An overlapping and interaction of four domains:
 - **Partnership** refers to viewing the client as an active partner, such that the client is considered an expert of their own experience and the partner is actively involved in the goal setting process (Rosengren, 2018);
 - **Compassion** refers to considering the individuals welfare (Rosengren, 2018);
 - **Evocation** refers to viewing clients as experts on themselves and then drawing out ideas and solutions from within the client (Rosengren, 2018);
 - **Acceptance** consisting of four components:
 - **Absolute worth**, which refers to viewing the client as an individual who has value and the potential to become more than they are currently;
 - **Autonomy**, which refers to providing the client with the agency to make decisions on their own behalf;
 - **Accurate Empathy**, which refers to having the ability and desire to view the world from the client's perspective while maintaining an objective awareness of their experience;
 - **Affirmation**, which refers to sharing affirmations about the client, as well as helping the clients to identify their own strengths to formulate affirmation statements regarding those strengths (Rosengren, 2018).
- **OARS + I**, involves:

- **Asking** the client **Open-Ended Questions** (e.g., “What goals do you have for this season?”).
- Developing and applying client **Affirmations** (e.g., “You are really determined about taking your performance to the next level”).
- **Reflective Listening**, such that the practitioner reflects back the client’s words to help them to recognize any of their own change talk and to funnel the conversation in a productive manner.
- **Summarizing the client’s statements** and perspectives to help the client to develop and recognize any change talk, to reflect empathy and understanding, and to connect previous conversations to support the process; summaries can collect and present back the clients’ information, to reinforce change talk; summaries can link information, such as to contrast ideas to strengthen support for change; and summaries can serve as a transition to ask relevant questions to guide the conversation forward.
- **Information exchange** (e.g., clarifying understandings, offering advice when requested) (Rosengren, 2018).
- **Eliciting change talk** involves asking the right questions to help the client recognize the different ways that they can adjust their current position (Rosengren, 2018).
- **Change talk** refers to **listening for the client’s Desires** to change, **Abilities** to change, **Reasons** for change, and **Needs** for change, known as the **DARN acronym** (Rosengren, 2018).
- **Guiding** is also defined as **the foundation for MI** (Rollnick, et al., 2020). **Skillful guiding involves connecting** with the individual as a person first, **inquiring about a**

way forward, offering advice with choices, developing a variety of action plans, and staying present with the client (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

In addition to the **DARN-C**, the **GROW** model, can play an integral role in the motivational interviewing process and the achievement of performance excellence (Owens, 2020). The Grow Model involves: **Goals (G)** - What does the client want? (e.g., Performance goal; Session goal; Long-term goal; Achieve, Resolve, Solve); **Reality (R)m** - What is happening? (e.g., Assess current reality, how attainable are goals? What have you tried so far?); **Options (O)** - What might client do? (e.g., Brainstorm to achieve goals?); **What's Next? (W)** - What will the client do? (e.g., Decide, Next, Steps) (Owens, 2020).

Skillful guiding involves connecting with the individual as a person first, inquiring about a way forward, offering advice with choices, developing a variety of action plans, and staying present with the client (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Relationship is central to the change process, which means reach out and connect, coach athletes like they are people, coach to the athlete's strengths, and give advice by providing choices (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Guiding involves, inquiring about a best way forward and offering advice with choice, developing action plans, and staying present (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

Motivational Interviewing also involves rolling with resistance, which means not arguing with client, acknowledging their experience, listening to them, and coming alongside them to calm them down (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Rolling with resistance means accepting the person not the problem (i.e., there is a person and then there's a problem), remembering that there is a time for listening and then a time for addressing problems, and asking genuinely curious, open-ended questions to understand them, and then supporting them with listening statements.

Motivational Interviewing also involves acknowledging and voicing affirmations, which is a method for reorienting clients towards the resources that they have within them (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Affirmations anchor clients to their identities, strengths, and capacities, all of which can function as resources as they address problem areas (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Affirmations help people feel open to change (Rollnick, et al., 2020). The key with affirmations is to focus on specific behaviors, instead of attitudes, decisions, and goals. Avoid using “I,” and focus on descriptions and not evaluations (e.g., “Your determination really supports you in challenging situations”) (Rollnick, et al., 2020). Attend to nonproblem areas rather than problem areas (i.e., nurture a competent viewpoint not a deficit) and positively state their strengths and attributes (e.g., “your confidence is contagious!”) (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

Sample of the Motivational Interviewing Process

- Approach the athlete as an individual first and focus on their well-being first and foremost (Rollnick, et al., 2020; Owens, 2020).
- Start conversations with connecting and expressing gratitude for their inherent qualities and efforts as an individual and as an athlete (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Apply MI with goal setting to help the athletes to draw out what is most important to them and to devise plans that make sense to them to optimize their motivation and commitment (Rollnick, et al., 2020; Burton & Raedeke, 2008).
- Use brief, open-ended questions to get the conversation going to help the athletes to recognize where they are in relation to their optimal performance (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

- Address the why and how the athletes/performers might change their current performance to help them to recognize their motivations and the steps that they can take to achieve their optimal performance (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Acknowledge the athletes' goals, importance, and expectations associated with the interaction of the meeting as well as for their performance (Rosengren, 2018).
- Ask scaling questions and request for numerical ratings (e.g., a scale from 1-10; 1 least, 10 most) to serve as a scaffolding for change talk to support optimal performance (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- After starting the conversation with some open-ended questions, follow up with multiple listening statements and summarizing statements to reflect empathy (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Reflective Listening is the primary skill on which MI is built, as it helps convey empathy, understanding, build rapport, ultimately taking the conversation in a forward direction (Rollnick, et al., 2020; Rosengren, 2018; Noetl, 2017).
- Use summarizing and listening statements that capture the core of what the client is saying, especially highlighting the strengths and values that they mentioned in their own statements, and then effectively paraphrasing and reflecting back to them the core of what they said (Rollnick, et al., 2020; Rosengren, 2018; Noetl, 2017).
- Approach the MI conversations with an open curiosity to help the client to uncover the information that they need to empower themselves to achieve optimal performance (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Listen for the Desire to change, Ability to change, Reasons for change, and Needs for change, and reflect them back to the client in their words.

- Manage the righting reflex, take a breath, and remember that the athlete has a wisdom and understanding of themselves that we do not possess (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Use the principles of motivational interviewing to help athletes to recognize that any ambivalence that they experience is an opportunity to understand themselves better and uncover what is important to them (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Ensure that if I feel the need to offer the athletes any advice that I will first gauge their understanding of the specific phenomena; ask their permission to offer advice with choices whenever possible, followed by clarifying their understanding of the advice that I have provided them (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Use a strengths lens while listening to the athletes talk in order to recognize their strengths and relay them back to them in the form of affirmations (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Ask open-ended questions to help the athlete to uncover their strengths and then provide listening statements and summarizing statements encapsulating their strengths to help them to recognize their strengths and qualities (Rollnick, et al., 2020).
- Properly phrase open-ended questions (e.g., how did you do that so well?") that will help the athletes to speak self-affirmations that will empower them to achieve optimal performance (Rollnick, et al., 2020).

Worksheet (Front)

Motivational Interviewing Role-Play Exercise

1) Acknowledge your partner and express gratitude for their presence in this conversation

2) Ask an open-ended question about what goals that they have for their performance?

3) Reflect back your partners answers that they stated in their words

4) Ask an open-ended question about where their performance is in relation to their goals

5) Reflect back your partner's answer about their current performance level

6) What do they believe that they can do to take their performance to their performance goals?

7) Reflect back your partner's answer about what they can do to take their performance to their goals, including speaking affirmations acknowledging their abilities to take their performance to the next level

Worksheet (Back)

8) Ask a scaffolding question, on a scale of one to ten how confident are they about taking their performance to the next level? _____.

9) Reflect back your partner's number and encourage them to tell you more about the number they chose _____
_____.

10) Ask partner an open-question about what they can do to support themselves in achieving their performance goal _____

_____.

11) Summarize partner's goals, plan of action, and strategies for supporting themselves in achieving their goals _____

_____.

References

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