| Topic | **Lesson** |
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| Failure of an Interview | * Failure to ask the right questions * Not spending the time to develop rapport * Using biased or leading questions * Inappropriate probes – i.e., failing to notice comments, body language, etc. indicating discomfort * Avoiding difficult situations |
| Getting to the Truth | * Plan the interview * Take the interview seriously. If it’s not worth your time to ask the questions correctly, then it’s not worth the resident’s/client’s/staff’s time to answer the questions honestly. * Don’t assume; get clarification * Learn how to ask difficult questions   + Compassion   + Understanding   + Empathy   + Control * Don’t guess * Keep the goal in mind * Adapt to odd and difficult situations |
| Developing Rapport | * The time you take to develop rapport can make or break an interview * Speak in a conversational tone * Use active listening; let the interviewee tell the story * Be professional (this means at the very least, ethical and objective) * Know when to end |
| Avoid Bias | * Don’t make assumptions based on your familiarity with the situation * Find out the facts – i.e., what the interviewee knows about the situation * Do not express your own opinion or how you think the interviewee should respond. * Do not suggest answers * Repeat questions * Ask questions more slowly * Rephrase questions * Let the person think about the answer; in fact let them know at the beginning of the interview that you will be happy to give them time to think before they respond * Do not appear impatient or abrupt * Do not use leading probes * Give the person an opportunity to express their own opinion in their own way |
| Probing | * Let the person tell the story then go back and clarify * A correct probe is a prompt that encourages further conversation.   + Probe for correctness, clarity, & completeness * Repeat questions and responses * Give feedback * Allow reflection on the full range of a situation – e.g., not just good-poor, but instead excellent-good-fair-poor * Probe in a conversational tone * Tell the person how important it is to get their point of view * Ask for specific responses or explanations:   + What do you mean by that?   + Tell me what that means to you?   + Definitions: What do you mean by short-staffed? Missing meds? Was exhibiting behaviors?   + Could you explain that?   + I’m not sure I understand… * Probe for completeness   + Fill in the spaces   + Narrow the times   + Seek more information on who |
| Difficult Situations | * When the interviewee is upset, don’t ignore him/her; provide some reassurance and emotional support:   + I’m sorry   + I understand   + It’s OK to cry.   + Do you need anything? * Don’t pity the person; be respectful and sensitive * Don’t make up stories * Move forward with the interview * Handle anger first; I know this is intrusive, but it has to be done. I’ll help you through it. * Others? |