

Family Law Education Reform Project

William Mitchell Client Interview Evaluation

OVERVIEW

This document is an evaluation for a client counseling exercise.

EXPLANATION AND COMMENTS

This evaluation may be used to assess students' performances in a client interviewing exercise. It may be distributed to students in the form of feedback, used to grade each student's performance, or both.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Contributed by the Faculty of:
William Mitchell College of Law
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The academic program at the William Mitchell College of Law is founded on legal theory and practical learning, professors who are both scholars and legal practitioners, and a student body that includes career professionals and recent college graduates.

The College of Law places an emphasis on practical lawyering skills by fusing together the curriculum and philosophy of teaching. From writing and trial advocacy program to their clinic program, the curriculum combines skills training with a focus on ethics and legal theory, preparing each student to be a powerful advocate and counselor to their clients.

Un-scored Client Interview Evaluation Sheet	WRAP Fall 2008
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William Mitchell College of Law (Writing & Representation: Advice & Persuasion)

Representation professor: _____ Student: _____

PORTRAYAL OF CLIENT

Appeared to be well prepared as client

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 unsatisfactory satisfactory excellent

Carried out role

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 unsatisfactory satisfactory excellent

CLIENT INTERVIEW SESSION

Introductions:

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 unsatisfactory satisfactory excellent

- Appropriate welcoming talk
- Clear statement of agenda
- Indication that no fee is charged for interview

Building Trust through Competent Communication:

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 unsatisfactory satisfactory excellent

- Spoke clearly, openly, and accurately
- Listened well
- Signaled competence, empathy, and safety

Obtaining information:

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 unsatisfactory satisfactory excellent

- Sought and obtained specific data, background information, and context (client’s motives and concerns)
- Obtained “opening snapshot” at outset
- Proceeded to explore facts in more detail (“video”)
- Used neutral and directive prompts appropriately
- Probed for additional detail through “flashback” and “slow-motion” techniques, as needed
- Effectively managed any obstacles such as lack of memory, embarrassment, or lack of focus
- Used an effective mix of open- and closed-ended questions
- Waited patiently for client’s responses and kept an open mind

(over)

Eliciting Direction:

- Explored immediate and overarching goals
- Discussed process preferences
- Obtained explicit directions

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

Discussing Next Steps:

- Clear explanation
- Sufficiently detailed explanation

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

Professionalism:

- Confident
- Respectful
- Articulate
- Organized
- Proper attire
- Proper attendance as lawyer and client

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

WRITTEN PLAN

Accurate statement of information to be verified

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

Thorough check-list of factual information yet to be obtained (including sources of information, availability of documents, etc.)

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

Well considered plan for discussing client goals and process preferences and for eliciting direction:

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent

Appropriate points for closing interview: client's next step, lawyer's next step, next contact

unsatisfactory		satisfactory		excellent