

Questions for a Brief Client Needs Assessment

Learning more about the problem
Focus questions
Ask the person to describe the problem. Be open and non-partisan in your questions.
Observation questions
What does the person see/hear/know?
What information do they have about the problem?
Try to define what IS the problem and what is NOT the problem.
Analysis questions
Probe what meaning the person sees in events surrounding the problem. (Interpretation/spin on the data)
This will help you understand their relationship to the event and how they think about it.
Feeling questions
Without trying to fix the feelings, try to discover how the person feels.
Exploring this will help the person be able to move on the rest of the discussion. (Though sometimes you will have to push a bit to get them to move on.)
Strategic questions
Visioning questions - What would “fixed” look like?
What would happen if this problem were fixed?
What would not happen any more?
Change questions
The questions in this stage should deal with how to get from the current state to the preferred state.
Notice that there will be more than one alternative for accomplishing the change.
Consideration of all the alternatives Try to hold no opinion at this point.
Doing nothing is always an alternative—and often one that appeals to clients.
Consider the consequences of each alternative.
What happens if we do this?
Look for short term, medium and long-term consequences.
Consider the obstacles to each alternative.

Personal involvement and buy in
What does this person bring to the equation in the solution? How can they help?
What do they need from you?
Personal action questions
What should the client do now?
What should you do now?
Do you have a commitment to each other to do something specific?
List the details of the to-dos
