

A Justice System Assessment and Training Report

A New Practice Model for Probation and Parole

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Ramsey County Community Corrections Department's Practice Model

A practice model is an integrated set of evidence-based practices and principles (EBP) that an agency believes will result in public safety outcomes if they are supported by the agency and followed with fidelity by its officers. A practice model describes the **practices** that line staff should follow to prevent more crime and promote the social and human capital (rehabilitation) of people under supervision. Ramsey County Community Corrections Department (RCCCD) has begun a process to articulate and refine its practice model. This paper describes version 1.0 of that practice model, and does so with the understanding that the practice model will continue to evolve.

The Practice Model has Three Core Components

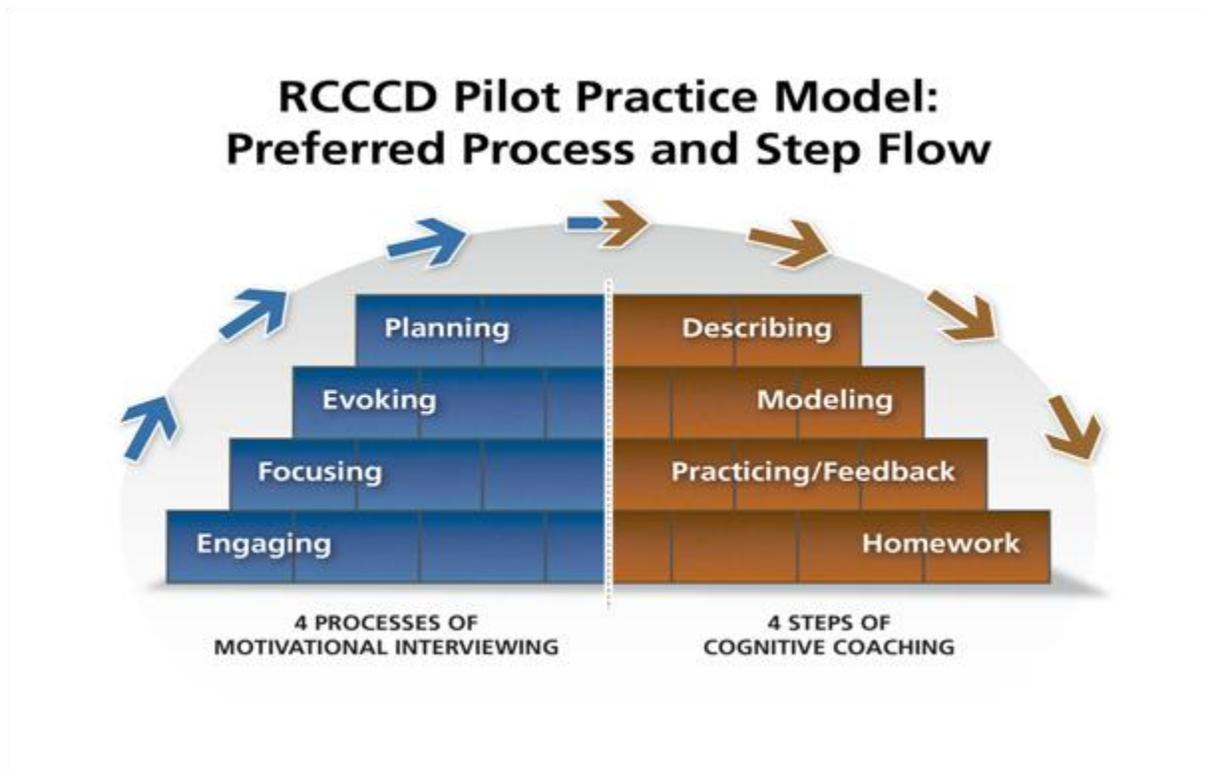
The practice model takes place within the context of a working or “change agent” relationship between an officer and his or her client as well as the larger social and cultural context of the agency. The practice model has three central or core components:

- 1) **The Platform of Supervision** – is the foundation for all supervision sessions and consists of four domains of line staff/client interaction:
 1. Motivational Interviewing;
 2. Cognitive Behavioral Coaching;
 3. Sanction/Reward Strategies; and
 4. Brokering of Service and Referrals.
- 2) **The Change Agent Navigation System** - helps line staff, as change agents, to chart a course that maintains non-voluntary client engagement and guides staff/client interactions towards positive outcomes.
- 3) **The Continuous Assessment Process** – a seven step process that progressively identifies and addresses relevant change targets through staff/client dialogue and action around the targets.

All three components of the practice model operate alongside and reinforce each other. Collectively, the three components help people under supervision to build momentum and direction in their desistance process and people supervising to support that desistance process. The three components also enable line staff to grow in autonomy, competence and purpose; three factors that are central to staff well-being and motivation¹.

1) The Platform of Supervision

The platform of supervision is at the center of the practice model, much like the mound on a baseball field it is the place where all the action begins. If one thinks of the platform of supervision as a four-sided pyramid then Motivational Interviewing (MI) is the front entrance or door into the pyramid. MI is the main pathway of entry because of its proven ability to help practitioners form a working or change agent relationship with people who need help to move past their natural ambivalence to change. MI has four processes or steps for working with clients – engagement, focusing, evoking and planning. These four steps of MI allow the practitioner and client to walk up to the top of the pyramid. Cognitive Behavioral Coaching (CBC) is the pathway out of the pyramid. CBC has four steps for helping people develop new behaviors – describing, modeling, practicing/feedback, and homework. These four steps allow the practitioner and client to walk down and out of the pyramid



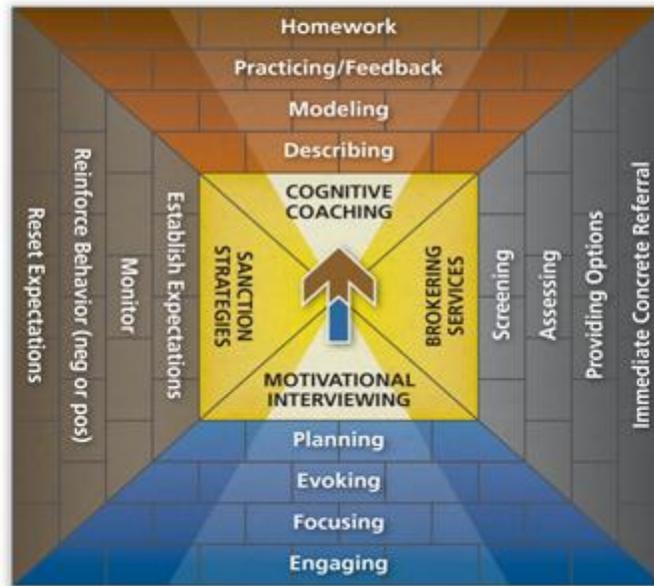
The four MI steps or processes develop client motivation and change talk around change targets and result in a change plan. To decrease recidivism, however, clients, especially higher risk clients, need more than a change plan, they need help to develop the self-regulation skills^{2,3,4} and social support^{5,6,7,8} that will allow them to practice and implement the change plan. CBC, unlike MI, can foster and guide all of this new social learning and skill development. Once the agent and client

have worked through the four MI processes, the four processes of CBC are the logical next steps for putting the particular change target into practice. This hand-off from MI to CBC is a well-established blended EBP.^{9,10} MI has little to offer people once they are motivated, focused on and planning some change in their life, but CBC has much to offer at this stage of change. Line staff, as change agents, can coach their clients from session to session in problem-solving strategies that increase self-awareness, self-regulation, and social-support and bring about change. The structure of the two primary sides of the pyramid – MI and CBC - increases intrinsic motivation and promotes forward movement toward meeting criminogenic needs, creating meaning and attaining a good life.

The other two sides of the four-sided pyramid augment the main pathway through the pyramid. One side represents the deliberate application of sanctions and rewards using the agency misconduct/good-conduct grid and contingency management system. This left-hand side of the pyramid (see figure below) has the four steps of: establishing clear behavioral expectations; monitoring expectations; using appropriate negative and positive reinforcements to maintain the expectations; and resetting new behavioral expectations as the client makes progress.

The right-hand side of the pyramid is the brokering of services and referrals to outside EBP agencies and providers. The first step here involves screening of clients for particular needs that the agency cannot meet such as health, accommodation, mentoring and specialized treatment needs such as mental, substance-abuse or sexual health. This screening leads, when necessary, to full assessment on the needs, the provision of referral options, and concrete referral. The left and right-hand sides of the platform of supervision – rewards/sanctions and brokering of services - function as ‘out-riggers’. They balance, support and enhance the main pathway – MI and CBC - of positive change for the client toward increasing levels of human, social and spiritual capital and well-being.

RCCCD Pilot Practice Model: Platform for Supervision



In summary, the first of the three main components of the practice model is the “platform of supervision.” The platform can be viewed as a four-sided pyramid with a main passageway through the pyramid supported by two side passages. MI is the entrance to that main pathway and CBC is the exit. The sanction/reward system in the agency forms the left-hand side of the pyramid, and brokering of services forms the right-hand side. The left and right-hand sides of the pyramid augment, support and enhance the main pathway's ability to support the client in his or her desistance process as he or she reduces their criminogenic needs, develops meaning and pursues a good life.

2) The Change Agent Navigation System

The change agent navigation system speaks to the personal and interpersonal skills that help line staff, as change agents, to chart a safe, healthy and productive course with their clients. The navigation system helps to maintain non-voluntary client engagement and guide that engagement toward positive outcomes.

If the process of change is likened to baking a nice cake using the right mix of ingredients, we can ask what mix of ingredients make for a really nice change process. According to research on change

our clients account for about 40% of a successful change process. The working relationship with a change agent accounts for about 30%. An additional 15% of the change comes from “programs” such as CBC or drug and alcohol programming, and the final 15% from the simple fact of paying attention to someone in a manner they perceive as helpful (placebo effect). In a sense the platform of supervision, the first component of the practice model, is designed to bring out the 40% of change that is contributed by the client and the 15% contributed by programs to the change process. The platform of supervision is all about working with the client in a way that brings out their natural strengths and tailors specific program interventions to them. The second component of the practice model – the change agent navigation system – focuses more on the change agent and is designed to bring out the 30% of the change process attributed to a working relationship with the change agent and the 15% from the placebo effect.

It is not easy to establish and maintain effective working relationships with people who often have multiple needs, poor pro-social skills, anti-social attitudes, and issues around violence, literacy, attention deficit disorder, impulsivity and substance abuse. Sometimes the sheer level of need can overwhelm line staff and make it hard for them to see the unique strengths and dignity of the person sitting opposite them. Of course, the level of need can also overwhelm the client and drain any hope they have of living a good life. The navigation system is the part of the model that helps officers to navigate this difficult journey with their clients. Over time, with training, practice, coaching and a good navigation system, agents learn how to think-on-their-feet, flexibly shift strategies to help their clients as needed, and maintain their own personal and professional well-being, growth, resiliency and balance.

One principle for navigating this difficult and nuanced journey is embodied in the leadership practice of ‘modeling-the-way’.¹¹ Agents are in a leadership position with clients who can be extremely marginalized, so they must take good care of themselves and model that self-care to their clients. One cannot underestimate the significance of this self-care. The old adage, “put on your own oxygen mask first” applies for a number of good reasons. First, in tightly scheduled, stressful environments it’s easy to get depleted when the clients are very needy. Second, while a ‘B’ game may suffice temporarily, a ‘C’ game rarely does; more often a ‘C’ game leads to burnout and compounded work-related stress. Third, there is a real need and opportunity in correctional service to ‘model’ prosocial attitudes and behaviors that foster well-being and lifestyle balance. Agents who have

personal well-being are in the enviable position of having daily opportunities for making a difference in the lives of clients, victims and the community.

To accomplish this work of public safety leadership, line staff must learn to draw on the four habits of the heart that make up the spirit of MI. The spirit of MI is a way of approaching reality and people that must be present if the particular skills and processes of MI are to flourish. The spirit of MI is the necessary condition for the skills of MI to work. There are four components to the spirit of MI.¹²

1. **Acceptance** and recognition of the absolute value of every person;
2. **Compassion** and empathy for others;
3. **Evocation** or drawing out the best in others; and
4. **Partnership** with others to finding solutions.

These modes of approaching others allow a change agent relationship to develop and also build and protect resiliency in line staff.^{13,14,15,16,17,18} Agencies and staff need to place a higher premium on the well-being and resiliency of line staff to spring back from draining interactions and demanding work in the highly constrained contexts of corrections. The context of community corrections encompasses both difficulties (such as poverty, racial disparity, large caseloads, violence, relapse, and the use of force to detain and incarcerate people) and benefits (such as team work/camaraderie with colleagues, meaningful employment, opportunities to grow in professionalism/mastery, and the ability to prevent harm and increase public safety). Agents work on a daily basis with people who have high levels of trauma, when we are not careful this exposure to trauma produces trauma and ill-health in staff. It takes courage, commitment and a certain kind of warrior like self-discipline to cultivate the mindfulness necessary to continue growing in the spirit of acceptance, compassion, evocation and partnership when faced with such high levels of trauma, suffering and need in others and also with our own natural weaknesses and needs.

A related aspect of the navigation system - taken from the transformative leadership literature - is the notion of 'enabling others to act through engagement'¹¹. Others act when they are engaged and engagement occurs when there is mutual trust and respect. We need to become dedicated and life-long students of engagement when working with people who are marginalized. Extensive research by the Gallup Research Organization has shown that engagement with clients/customers is central

to success in business.^{19,20} Engagement is the leading process of MI. Of the four principles of MI (i.e., engaging, focusing, evoking and planning) engagement is the only one that is *never* contra-indicated with clients. Engagement, of course, goes beyond our work with clients to our work with colleagues and our own professional/personal growth. Paradoxically, our level of engagement with clients, colleagues and self at work is a protective factor that diminishes the risk of burnout. There is something foundational about the MI spirit itself that make it truly worth sustaining in ourselves and with others at all times and in all contexts, to whatever degree possible.

Cultivating and modeling the MI spirit does not mean being all sweetness and light, far from it. A sweetness and light approach would be completely out of touch with the complex and extremely difficult circumstances of supervision. Sweetness and light does not match up to the kind of courageous interaction called for in supervision. Clients often operate far away from this spirit of engaged empathy and sometimes agents have to use the sheer coercive force of the correctional system with clients to ensure public safety. But this does not mean that a deeply compassionate and engaging viewpoint is incompatible with corrections. All of the research and, in many cases, the personal values of individual agents point to the fact that public safety is enhanced through a clear-eyed, courageous and empathetic engagement with clients along with a belief that clients can and are responsible for change. At the very least line staff maintains its humanity with this approach and fosters its own sense of autonomy, competence and purpose.

In summary line staff shows true leadership by modeling the way for clients and enabling them to act and by embodying the four elements of the MI spirit - acceptance, compassion, and evocation and partnership. This way of charting a course with high risk clients maintains their non-voluntary engagement and guides that engagement toward positive pro-social outcomes. Even though these MI elements are crucial, however, line staff must also be free to use non-MI approaches in situations where other approaches are more appropriate and legitimately required. This freedom to use a variety of approaches brings a much-needed flexibility to the navigation system.

Flexibility in the Navigation System - Following, Guiding and Directing

In their more recent books^{21,12} the authors of MI discuss three different fundamental styles of interacting with clients - *following*, *directing* and *guiding*. These three styles of interaction are universally found in all human service arenas. Workers shift between these styles in varying degrees depending

on the circumstances they find themselves in and their own natural predisposition and skill in using each style.

A *following* style is associated with many conventional counseling approaches and primarily involves listening to people and understanding their situation. The *following* style often comes to the forefront in the screening and assessment process with clients when listening to understand is vital.

A *directing* style involves giving orders and taking charge, to some degree, of the client's situation. *Directing* is common during intake and orientation procedures and can also take place while managing the daily operations of a prison/jail or during boundary setting with psychopathic personalities and establishing accountability with sanctions/rewards.

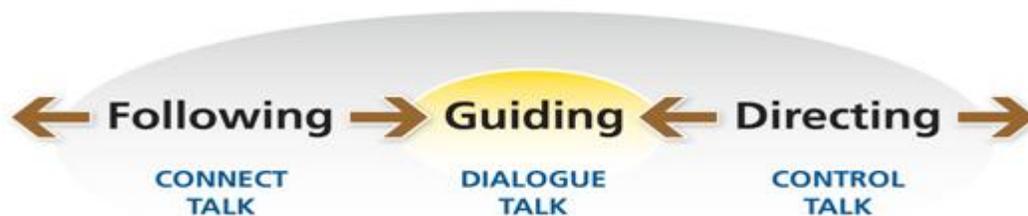
A *guiding* style integrates aspects of *following* (listening) and *directing* (taking charge) to help the client find and give voice to their motivation and commitment regarding a particular change target. *Guiding* is useful in establishing mutual goals and getting underway towards these goals. In addition, there is an important place for *guiding* when people become lost or stuck in their change path.

One's predominant style is largely a function of choice and personality, but it can also be influenced by the norms of an agency and the roles officers are expected to play by the agency. Roles (e.g., coach, resource broker, law enforcer) differ from styles in a few ways. Roles are more rigid, they are based on established agency expectations and social norms. Generally speaking we have to adapt to the role expectations on our situation - if I am the pitcher on the softball or baseball team I am expected to pitch, if I am the batter I am expected to bat. Styles, however, shift depending on the purpose and dynamics of what is happening on the ground – my style of pitching shifts to meet the needs of the particular game. Rather than being driven by the expectations or norms of a situation, styles are a function of placing more emphasis on specific skills sets. People have more choice and agency over the skills they use than the roles they play.

Following taps more directly into sympathizing, encouraging, and showing personal expressiveness, the three tactics Vogelvang²² recommends for giving strength to offenders. In terms of micro or clinical skills, following relies on greater use of open ended questions and affirmations. *Directing* draws upon the Vogelvang tactics for controlling (correcting and sanctioning, holding accountable

and showing self-control) as well as his tactics for realizing structure with clients. Directing therefore relies on the skills of teaching, giving advice and confrontation. *Guiding* is most strongly associated with the skills of reflection and summarization, and requires extensive use of the tactics for realizing structure such as clarifying, framing and setting rules²². One has to use suggestions, instructions and client-centered listening skills to guide. The *directing* and *following* styles, however, ultimately rely upon one of these two broad skill sets, either suggestions/instructions for directing or client-centered listening skills for following.

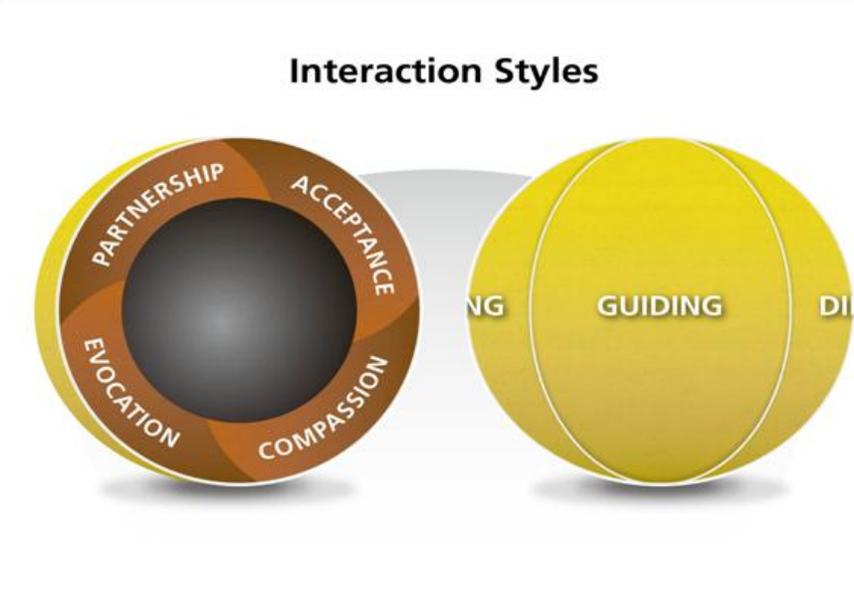
Platform Navigation: Use of Interaction Styles for Building Effective/Ineffective Working Alliances



To summarize, *following*, *guiding* and *directing* are three basic styles of interaction that an agent can use more flexibly than roles. Because styles are more closely associated with skills than roles they can be linked to agent tactics for giving strength (*following*), realizing structure (*guiding*) and control (*directing*). Styles are related to emphasizing different sets of clinical skills. Each style also lends itself to a particular form of everyday talk or language: *following* relates to connect talk, *guiding* to dialogue talk and *directing* to control talk²³. To be effective, agents need to use styles flexibly, and this flexibility is compatible with maintaining the four elements of the MI spirit.

The following analogy illustrates how the agent's MI spirit can be relatively constant while his or her style can and must vary according to context, role and immediate goal. Imagine an agent as a tennis ball. The agent tennis ball has an inner rubber core of MI spirit - acceptance, compassion, evocation and partnering – that produces a fair amount of resiliency in the ball/agent. Next, picture the outer covering of the tennis ball separated by the lines on the ball into three different surface or face areas – following, guiding, directing. Each face of the surface or style comes into play depending on the

particular context and need of the supervision process. Of course, this tennis ball analogy applies to both the client and the agent as both will have a certain spirit at their core and choose to use different styles of interacting depending on the situation and their definition of the situation.

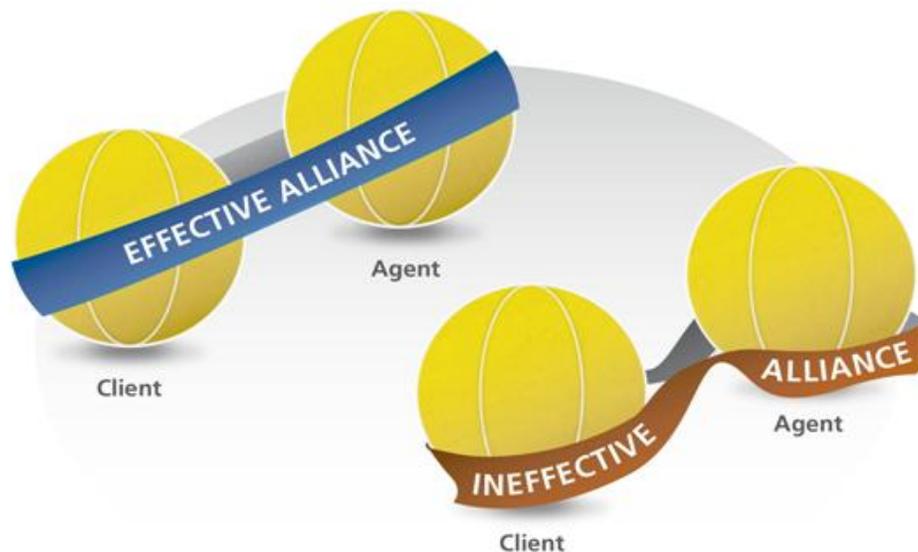


If we extend the tennis ball analogy (representing the change agent’s navigation system) onto the pyramid (representing the platform of supervision), we begin to see a relationship between each side of the pyramid (MI, CBC, reward/sanction strategy, and brokering of services) and a preferred style associated with each side. For example, when the brokering function is taking place there will be a need to move back and forth from *following* to *directing*. On the other hand, when an agent is practicing CBC it is quite likely he or she will emphasize *directing* more than *guiding* or *following*. The passageway into the pyramid via the processes of MI clearly emphasizes the *guiding*. The reward./sanction support usually relies more on *directing*. The tennis ball in our analogy therefore rotates so that the area representing the preferred style faces the other ball representing the client. The MI spirit, represented by the inner rubber core, is always present and provides resilience as obstacles arise in any section of the pyramid.

Finally, in this same analogy one can conceptualize the overall working alliance between the client and agent as a belt that encircles the two tennis balls with varying degrees of tension. When there is too much slack on the belt there may be issues with the relationship, just as there might be when there is too much tension. The goal of the working alliance is to help the client cycle through the front door of the pyramid and out the back door as many times as necessary until desistance has

been established and can be maintained. Each time the client goes through this process they build their human, social and spiritual capital and become more able to pursue their version of a good life and desist from harming others, themselves or society.

Effective and Ineffective Alliances



3) The Continuous Assessment Process

The third component of the practice model is an on-going assessment process that serves to guide and adjust the focus or change target of supervision to progressively deeper levels. Over time the agent and client explore seven stages of assessment to make sure every area relevant to desistance is covered. Assessment is not a single event but rather an on-going process. The process is designed to progressively engage people on topics that are more and more personal and relevant to the risk and protective factors in their lives that are pushing them toward or pulling them away from crime.

There are seven steps to the process and the process is reiterative. Once a change target topic (e.g., antisocial peers, dysfunctional family relations, etc.) is thoroughly explored so that related underlying gaps and thinking errors are surfaced, along with alternative self-change mechanisms, very practical exercises (supported by specific coaching guides in the curriculum manual) can be engaged. As appropriate skill rehearsals and exercises are completed, the agent and client can return to the

risk/need assessment findings to reengage the functional analysis process and tease out and pursue another pertinent topic.

There is a strong functional analysis component in this assessment process that logically operates between stages three and seven. Clients are encouraged and supported in discussing their most recent episodes with criminal or deviant behavior in a manner that thoroughly examines the antecedents and reinforcement patterns, including high risk situations, triggers, emotional and cognitive dependencies (rules) and schemas that led up to these events.

Finally, the RCCCD Pilot Practice Model includes a set of three important ‘check-in’s’ that the agent reviews with the client at the onset of every session, similar to a pilot’s pre-takeoff review. The first check-in is *role clarification*, an EBP as prescribed by Chris Trotter for use with non-voluntary clients. The second check-in is *homework review* and the third is *progress on any existing relapse prevention plans and strategies*. These check-ins only take a minute or two but they are very important. In addition to framing and focusing the upcoming session, the check-ins serve as opportunities for reinforcing the client’s progress in their real-life communities outside the agency.

Stage 1: Physical Need Assessment

The first stage of the continuous assessment process screens for physical impairments and basic safety needs (Maslow’s first level of need). How is the client meeting his or her food, shelter, clothing, sanitary and medical needs? This level of assessment covers the any immediate or crisis needs that have to be taken care of before other work even becomes possible.

Stage 2: Motivation and Responsivity Assessment

Having shown the client some basic human care and support in stage 1 it is now time to work on their motivation and responsivity concerns. Stage 2 assessment aims to understand how the client uniquely experiences his or her world, what motivates them, and how the agent can foster the best response to supervision. Several new developments in the field have taken place in this area of assessment, so we will take a little time to outline these new developments.

The first development has been the emergence of the "Good Lives Model" of supervision. In a nutshell this model posits that everyone, including people under supervision, wants a good life. A

good life is made up of goods that are essential to being human such as happiness, meaningful work, autonomy, creativity, inner peace and community²⁴. People who commit crime mistakenly believe that crime will get them the good life in they need to learn there are better ways. Their basic desires for the good things in life, however, are valid and do not need to change. The correctional system of Canada has found that when its begins a regime of treatment for prisoners with a module that helps them to identify what a good life looks like for them the prisoners become very motivated and are much more likely to remain in treatment.

The second development has been a series of meta-analytic studies by the American Psychological Association (APA) on the responsivity or matching factors of clients that improve psychological outcomes in treatment^{25,26}. This body of research has identified four ways of matching to the responsivity concerns of clients that are "demonstrably effective."

1. **Culture** - acknowledging and intentionally bringing a person's culture into the supervision process is very important. This might mean matching African-American, Hispanic or Caucasian clients with agents of similar background, or developing specific culturally sensitive supervision approaches for different cultures.
2. **Client Preference** - simply asking and taking into account the preferences of clients for how they would like to be supervised are also important. For example, one can inquire whether a person would prefer to be supervised by a male or a female officer or through a group or individual process. Of course, it will not always be possible or advisable to go along with the preferences of the client, but it is always advisable to take their preferences into account.
3. **Way of Making Meaning** - bringing a person's way of making ultimate meaning in life into the supervision process is also important. People have three basic ways of making ultimate meaning – humanist, spiritual and religious. Humanists believe in the goodness of human life and they take a secular approach to making meaning. People who are spiritual relate to a higher power or some transcendent source of meaning beyond human life but they do not relate to a particular religious way of life. People who are religious interact with one of the many religious pathways in life such as Jewish, Catholic, Muslim or Protestant. Once an agent is open to all of the different ways of making meaning it is entirely legitimate for them to integrate their client's way of making meaning into the supervision process²⁷.

4. **Reactance** - some people, including many of the clients under supervision, really like to be the "captain of their own ship", they like to be the ones in control. Other people under supervision can hardly tie their shoelaces and they have little need to be in control. The APA research has found that therapists are more effective when they give more control (*following*) to those who want to be in control, and take more control (*directing*) with those who are needier or more dependent in their personality²⁸. Traditionally in probation, however, we have often done the opposite.

Stage 3: Risk and Need Assessment

Now it is time to engage clients in the process of building an inventory of their criminogenic risk, need and protective factors. This is the classic assessment of the big 8 criminogenic risk/need factors: anti-social history, anti-social personality, anti-social attitudes, anti-social companions, work/education, family/marital, substance abuse and leisure/recreation. Usually the risk/need assessment comes before the assessment of the client's motivation and responsivity issues, but it is probably preferable to place the motivation and responsivity assessment first because this enhances intrinsic motivation and helps to build rapport.

Stage 4: Client Rules and Schemas

The assessment process then considers some of the client's core human capital: the unwritten emotional and cognitive 'rules' and schemas* that clients may be using to empower or disempower themselves. This level of assessment goes deeper to the internal cognitive tapes that are running through a person's mind and underlay their responsivity, risk, and need factors.

Stage 5: Social Support and Mapping

Now, the focus of assessment shifts to the client's social support system. This social support system dictates the kinds of routine opportunities he or she might have for continuing antisocial involvement or developing pro-social involvement, meaning and support. A functional analysis procedure that allows one to create a visual map of the person's social support system can be extremely helpful for both the agent and the client.

Stage 6: Goals

Jointly agreed upon goals or change targets are continuously established and processed by the agent and client. The particular change targets will always relate to one of the four dimensions of the platform of supervision – intrinsic motivation, skill development, reinforcement of accountability or meeting some assessed need through services.

Stage 7: Context

Perhaps the deepest level of assessment comes through developing a granular understanding of the overall context of the client's life. At this level we are talking about family history, socioeconomic status, neighborhood factors (inner-city, suburbs or rural), cultural factors etc. Context conditions consciousness, in many ways the situation we live in determines how we think. Ramsey County has a unique context and the local knowledge of agents is crucial for figuring out how that local context can hinder or support desistance.



This whole-person assessment relies upon three check-in procedures that happen at the beginning of every assessment session. 1) Role clarification; 2) Homework review; and 3) Relapse Prevention strategies around old and new change targets. This three-point check up at the beginning of each session maintains the forward momentum in the assessment process.

In conclusion, this paper outlines version 1.0 of Ramsey County's Practice Model. The practice model has three main components: 1) the platform of supervision; 2) the change agent's navigation system; and 3) the continuous process of assessment. Each of the main components has a number of subcomponents. These are the integrated set of evidence-based practices and principles (EBP) that Ramsey County believes will result in public safety outcomes if they are supported by the agency and followed with fidelity by its officers. Ramsey County's practice model describes the **practices** that line staff should follow to prevent more crime and promote the social and human capital (rehabilitation) of the people under supervision in Ramsey County.

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Recommended Alternative Procedures

In the first instance, when a ‘failure-to-launch’ is occurring within any of the additive MI processes, there may come a time and place for shifting from an emphasis on guiding the client towards their own motivation to *directing* them into cognitive coaching. Of course, before making this course shift, agents will usually reflect on the case, and hopefully at least re-explore with their client one or all of the processes preceding the one they are experiencing a lack of progress in. Assuming this kind of due diligence does take place, the agent might beneficially try shifting their style (not their spirit) from a guiding stance to a more *directing* stance that deliberately uses less ‘connect talk’ and more ‘light controlling talk’ to persuade and encourage the client into some immediate skill-building exercises, conforming to steps at the back-end of the model. This shift in stance ideally should be prefaced by some role clarifications that serve to maintain transparency and trust. In addition, engaging a menu of options for choices on skills is recommended whenever possible as well as the elicit-provide-elicited (E-P-E) tempo (recommended in MI for evoking) for interactions, even though the style has shifted: precluding efforts to engage clients in relationship is never recommended.

In the second scenario, whenever non-compliance issues present themselves in a case, there may also be a need to down-shift in the processes to re-establish engagement as well as re-examine previous assumptions about a client’s target behavior, readiness and plans. Here too, the agent may want to be ready to at least temporarily shift styles from *guiding* and *following* to *directing*, should the client show disinterest in engagement. Another common reason for shifting to *directing* will be to achieve case control using Vogelvang’s²⁴ three recommended tactics: correcting and sanctioning,

calling into account and showing self-control. The latter tactics are explained in detail in the context of employing sanctioning strategies, one of the 'sides' of the pyramid model. If the client is merely (and understandably) defensive, flexibility across styles may be the best option. Whenever an agent anticipates deliberately emphasizing a new style in a protracted manner some role clarifications might provide a helpful segue.

We anticipate at least two kinds of case circumstances that will depart from the linear trajectory of the model. First, there will be clients that present continuing challenges regarding movement through the MI processes. Regardless whether the 'challenge' is about the client or the agent's MI skills and spirit, we anticipate not all clients will make it into the end-zone with articulate change plans. In fact, some probably will not be able to demonstrate or give voice to a critical mass of change talk either, or even successfully solidify a focus, or, in a few cases, a working alliance (engagement). Second, it's not hard to foresee clients who, whether or not they are making progress with their motivation and involvement in the MI processes, get into trouble with compliance issues. And as a result of this trouble these folks require sanctions, new referrals and other immediate attention and possible enforcement activity. In either of the above case scenarios, the nice linear flow of the progression depicted in the model is interrupted and guidelines for what to do when this happens follow.