

Like Driving a Car – Conducting a client interview

Conducting a client interview can be a lot like learning to drive a car. For the experienced clinician they do not need to think about introducing themselves, asking for the client's consent to participate, and they do not even need a list of questions to refer to during the interview. They can function on "auto-pilot" and it all seems to just flow smoothly. They can even deviate from a specific order of questioning to accommodate the client who wants to talk and go off on a tangent. The experienced clinician can comfortably glean the necessary information from the client in any order and even weave their probing questions into what appears to be a friendly conversation rather than a formal interview. A truly experienced clinician doesn't need to take notes during the interview. They can recall the key information afterwards.

On the other hand, a novice clinician usually follows a structured order of questions, often referring to the questions already written down in front of them. They may need to practice simply introducing themselves to the client, asking for consent, and asking each question one at a time in a specific order. They typically write their answers down after each response from the client.