

# Counseling Skills Checklist

Instructions for self-assessment: Check “yes” or “no” as to whether you routinely demonstrate each skill during your counseling sessions, and write comments.

Instructions for observation: Silently observe and evaluate the counseling session. Do not interact verbally or nonverbally with the woman or the counselor during an observation. Check “yes” or “no” as to whether the provider demonstrated each skill during the counseling session, and write comments. Offer your evaluation and comments to the provider in private after the conclusion of the session.

Skills	Yes	No	Comments
<b>Pregnancy Options</b>			
<b>Discusses pregnancy options with woman, if she desires it</b>			
Voluntary, informed consent			
Provides full information on options			
Discusses benefits, risks, alternatives and what to expect with each procedure			
Explores consequences of not receiving abortion-related care			
Explains details of procedure			
Ensures the woman has understood the information			
Ensures the woman has given consent without pressure or coercion			
Obtains consent before the uterine evacuation, unless the woman is in need of emergency care			
<b>Procedure Options</b>			
Explains pregnancy and medical information, medical eligibility, available methods and pain management in clear, simple language			
Encourages her questions and ensures that she understands the information provided			
Avoids inserting own preferences into discussion			
Obtains permission to treat the woman in the unlikely event of a complication or emergency			
Discusses return to fertility post-procedure, contraceptive options and when they can be given			
<b>Counseling</b>			
Counsels privately where no one else can see or hear			
Assures her of confidentiality			
Asks the woman in private whether she wants to invite anyone else in			
Structures counseling around each woman’s needs and concerns			
Considers woman’s individual circumstances, including emotional and physical state, medical condition, cultural and religious background and comprehension			

Demonstrates empathy			
Separates personal values and beliefs from those of the woman			
Provides referrals to additional services if necessary			
<b>Effective Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication</b>			
Faces or sits beside woman without physical barriers between them			
Leans forward slightly and makes appropriate eye contact			
Asks open-ended questions without judgment or assumptions			
Answers the woman's questions fully, using simple language			
Makes appropriate sounds, facial expressions and gestures			
Listens actively by being attentive and focusing on the woman			
Reflects understanding of woman's feelings and concerns			
Confirms the woman correctly understands the information			
Takes into account special considerations			
<b>Referrals</b>			
Refers to other available health services that are needed			
Makes referrals to services that are accessible and appropriate			
<b>Closing a Counseling Session</b>			
Asks woman to summarize key information discussed			
Solicits additional questions			
Ensures the woman understands information and instructions			
Provides written or pictorial information or referrals, if appropriate			
Documents services and referrals in logbook			