

STEPS FOR INTRODUCING A NEW SOCIAL SKILL

1. Establishing a rationale for the skill:

- Elicit reasons for learning the skill from group participants.
- Acknowledge all contributions.
- Provide additional reasons not mentioned.

2. Discussing the steps of the skill:

- Break down the skill into 3 or 4 steps.
- Write the steps on a board or poster.
- Discuss the reasons for each step.
- Check for understanding each step.

3. Modeling the skill in a role-play:

- Plan the role-play in advance.
- Explain that you will demonstrate the skill in a role-play.
- Use two leaders to model the skill (when possible).
- Keep the role-play simple.

4. Reviewing the role-play with the members:

- Discuss whether each step of the skill was used in the role-play.
- Ask group members to evaluate the effectiveness of the role model.
- Keep the review brief and to the point.

5. Engaging a client in a role-play:

- Start with a client who is more skilled than others or is likely to be compliant.
- Request the client to try the skill in a role-play of the same (or similar) situation with one of the leaders.
- Ask the client questions to make sure he or she understands the goal.
- Instruct group members to observe the client.

6. Providing positive feedback:

- Elicit positive feedback from group members about the client's performance.
- Encourage specific feedback.
- Postpone corrective feedback, and cut off any negative feedback.
- Praise effort and provide hints to group members about good performance.

7. Providing corrective feedback:

- Elicit suggestions for how the client could do the skill better next time.
- Limit the feedback to one or two suggestions.
- Strive to communicate the suggestions in a positive, upbeat manner.

8. Engaging the client in another role-play of the same situation:

- Request that the client change one behavior in the role-play.
- Ask the client questions to check on his or her understanding of the suggestion.
- Work on behaviors that are most salient and changeable.

9. Providing additional feedback:

- Be generous but specific when providing positive feedback.
- Focus first on the behavior that the client was requested to change.
- Engage client in two to four role-plays, with feedback after each one.
- Use other behavior-shaping strategies to improve skills, such as coaching, prompting, and supplemental modeling

(Steps 5–9 are repeated for each client.)

10. Assigning homework:

- Give an assignment to practice the skill.
- Tailor the assignment to each individual client.
- Ask group members to identify situations in which they could use the skill.

Source: “Integrated Treatment for Dual Disorders,” Mueser, Noordsy, Drake, & Fox (p. 176)