

SIX CATEGORY INTERVENTION ANALYSIS

Six Category Intervention Analysis is a way of looking at how we intervene in others' lives. It is particularly relevant to the one-to one relationship that we have with supervisees or with clients to whom we offer a service. It can also apply to any relationship; formal or informal, between a helper and client.

How are such interventions categorised?

The six categories are characterised by the helper's **intention**, which is primarily to help someone achieve his/her potential as a person. Three of the categories are more authoritative (not authoritarian) – the helper's power is emphasised (hierarchy); the other three are more facilitative – the power of the person who we are trying to help is emphasised (autonomy). Both are important, and when the two approaches are well balanced power is shared and true co-operation can take place.

The authoritative categories

- Prescriptive interventions are intended to direct the client's behaviour. The helper may give advice, suggestions or ideas.
- Informative interventions are intended to inform the client. The helper may give facts or share his/her own experiences.
- Confronting interventions are intended to raise the client's awareness of something about his/her attitude of behaviour. The helper may draw attention to aspects of the supervisor/supervisee relationship.

The facilitative categories

- Cathartic interventions are intended to enable the client to express more painful emotions – anger, fear and pain. The helper may encourage him/her to focus on difficult feelings.
- Catalytic interventions are intended to enable the client to learn, plan or decide for him/herself. The helper may encourage the person to 'brainstorm' ideas and/or consider the pros and cons of various options.
- Supportive interventions are intended to affirm the client as a person. The helper may give praise and/or encourage positive self-validation. This intervention should characterise all other interventions too.

An understanding of these six categories of interventions, and the ability to use them skilfully and appropriately, can help us to help others more effectively.

Taken from : J Heron; "Helping the Client"