

ROBERT CARKHUFF'S LEVELS OF RESPONDING

The Carkhuff Empathy Scale

08-26-2020

Rating	Rating Criteria and Commentary (<i>High to Low</i>)
5.0	<p>This response is "inspired" and seems to "just happen" when the chemistry is right between counselor and client. A Level 5.0 response is "perfect" in most every way, and moves the session forward in a dramatic fashion. Typically, these don't happen because of any attempt to engineer them ... they just happen.</p> <p>RULE: Everything is working perfectly in the counselor-client relationship. There is absolute trust and the counselor can be "one with the client"; the counselor is able to articulate what the client may not be able to say, and reflects an accurate representation of the client's deepest thoughts and feelings.</p> <p>SYMBOL: You have it figured out, and aren't afraid to be with your client through any emotional experience. "Better than excellent" work.</p>
4.5	<p>This response includes all of the positive attributes of the Level 3.0 response, and it adds to the client's expression. Typically, the inclusion of the Core Conditions of Confrontation and/or Immediacy will enhance a response to the quality of Level 4.0.</p> <p>RULE: Your client will grow more rapidly with Level 4.0 responses because they tend to challenge the client's assumptions and enhance the relationship between counselor and client.</p> <p>SYMBOL: Great work. You may not need me as your professor much longer. I think you're getting the hang of this!</p>
3.5	<p>Also known as a "minimally facilitative" or "mutually interchangeable" response, it accurately identifies and communicates understanding and awareness of the affect and content of the client's message, yet it does not add to the client's expression.</p> <p>RULE: A solid awareness of both content and affect, accurately communicated to the client.</p> <p>SYMBOL: Good for you! Solid stuff. Your client will grow, but not as rapidly as they will with higher-level responses. It is time to be additive without being interpretive.</p>
2.5	<p>This response is again subtractive from the client's expression; the counselor is less-than-appropriately empathic and/or substantially misses the "mark." The counselor may communicate some awareness of surface feelings of the client, but counselor's "communications drain-off a level of affect and distort the level of meaning" (Carkhuff, 1969).</p> <p>RULE: An attempt is made to identify and communicate affect and/or content, but the level of accuracy is sufficiently "off" as to warrant the expression "subtractive."</p> <p>SYMBOL: Something is missing here! Off the mark! Dull, inaccurate response.</p>
1.5	<p>This response subtracts substantially from the client's expression. It shows the counselor to be "way off the mark" and unable to sensitively or accurately respond to the client's statements.</p> <p>RULE: Neither content nor affect is accurately identified or communicated to the client.</p> <p>SYMBOL: Yikes! Counselor is not listening, or not focusing on the client!</p>