

Adviser - Recruitment Test

Working with and advising clients requires you to be familiar with:

- listening
- questioning
- summarising
- explaining information

In a full advice interview you will need to use these skills to get a complete picture of the client's situation in order to be able to explore all the issues that might be involved. You will then move on to identifying the client's options for managing their situation, helping them to make an informed choice about their next steps, and deciding with them what action should be taken and who will take it.

The following exercises cover aspects of the required skills mentioned and key components of the advice process. Please complete and email to:

recruitment@casouthwarwickshire.org.uk

Exercise 1

There are occasions where we do not deal with a particular type of problem, or because the client needs specialist help, or because they can be dealt with more quickly by the other agency. On these occasions may provide contact details of another agency that can more suitably support the client with their problem. We refer to this as signposting. We may also actively pass on the client details and summary of their situation to another trusted agency. This would be called a client referral.

What do you think you can do to make sure that more of your clients take up the referrals that you make or seek support from organisations you have signposted them to?

List at least five ideas

Exercise 2

Citizens Advice public site, www.citizensadvice.org.uk, is often the main information source for assessment or diagnostic interviews in the local office when it is clear that the client may be able to resolve their situation with some general information and self-help.

Often when dealing with telephone or email queries the public site is used to provide clients with general information about their problem, either so that they are able to resolve it themselves, if appropriate, or to have a better understanding when talking to an adviser later.

Using the public site, work your way through the following short scenarios to identify the most relevant information for the client. Describe the steps you took to find the relevant information and insert link(s) to the relevant page(s) of the most public site (only 1 to 3 links required)

Example:

Typed 'eviction by private landlord' in search bar, scrolled down results to and selected Eviction because summary stated 'Check what you can do if your landlord is trying to evict you. Check the process your landlord has to follow.'

Selected the following links under heading 'Renting Privately' and reviewed the following pages:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/eviction/getting-evicted/renting-privately/if-you-get-a-section-21-notice/>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/eviction/getting-evicted/renting-privately/check-your-section-8-notice/>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/eviction/getting-evicted/renting-privately/if-youre-being-evicted-because-you-asked-for-repairs-renting-privately/>

Scenarios

1. You receive an email from Marsha, who is wondering if she can cancel her TV contract and get a refund as she is moving to live abroad next month.
2. Claire has telephoned your office. She works two days a week and wants to know how much holiday she is entitled to in a year. She has access to the internet at home.
3. Marika comes into the office as her mother wants to move into a care home and Marika doesn't really know anything about the subject. She asks for information to help her.
4. Jose is on the telephone from work complaining that he has been

discriminated against. He is going to take this up through his union. He has asthma and before he talks to his union rep, he wants to know if this counts as a disability.

5. Ms Kaur rings up to ask if she has to pay prescription charges
6. I think my electricity meter might be faulty – my bills are very high. Before you start searching, which category would you expect to find information about this?

Exercise 3

There are three main next steps from initial assessment/exploration of the client situation over the phone. These are:

1. Assisted information

Assisted information uses standard material usually obtained from CA Public Site or other reputable sites to inform the client how to manage their own problem. The adviser should identify appropriate resources and ensure that, in the circumstances, the client can take the matter forward.

2. Signposting and referral

This is where a client is given contact details of another agency that can provide a better service than the local office for their problem. This may be because the local office doesn't deal with this type of problem, or because the client needs specialist help, or because they can be dealt with more quickly by the other agency.

3. Face to Face Advice

If the client can't be helped with assisted information or signposting over the phone, they will usually be given an appointment to see an adviser or caseworker or advised to attend a drop in session at a particular location. for an adviser to phone them. However, in emergencies or where time allows, the client could be advised on the phone straight away subject to the client's ability to understand and take in the information and advice given over the phone.

(It may be that more than one next step is needed for a client)

Have a look at the following six client scenarios. For each example say:

a) What do you think would be the most appropriate next steps for this client?

b) What are the factors you took into account in making this choice?

- 1. Robina** bought a new bed. When the bed was delivered it didn't fit the bedroom. Robina rang the store and they said they would replace it with a smaller size, which they did. The replacement bed was delivered last week and one of the legs of the bed has broken. The store says there is nothing they can do.
- 2. Rafael** took on a tenancy about 6 months ago. He paid a deposit and knows there was some scheme, but he can't find any paperwork. The tenancy is coming to an end and Rafael wants to know what the scheme might have been and what his rights are.
- 3. Davina** wants to know about her benefit entitlement. She was on maternity leave and cannot return to her previous job as her employer can only offer full-time, which she cannot manage with a child. She would like to know what benefits are available to her. Davina has internet access at home.

4. **Ashley** is a regular visitor to the centre and has mild learning difficulties. She lives independently in local authority housing and today brings in a letter from the local authority saying they are going to install double glazing in a few weeks' time. The letter says the workers will need access to Ashley's flat and they will have identification cards with them. Ashley wants to know what the letter is about.
5. **Teklet** has asylum forms to complete and has to attend a Home Office interview. The forms must be completed within the next two weeks. There is no specialist adviser available in the local office.
6. **Neil** has debts totalling around £35,000. You have checked there are no emergencies - Neil has kept up with the mortgage, council tax and utility bills. His income is around £2500 per month. He has internet access at home and is used to writing business letters.