



Local Government Training Group

## **COUNSELLING SKILLS FOR HR MANAGERS**

### **Recommended For:**

This course is ideally suited for HR professionals and line managers who are required to deal with employees on a one-to-one basis regarding sensitive issues affecting their motivation and performance. The skills are aimed to complement their existing skill-set and provide them with an effective tool in the workplace. This course is not, therefore, designed to train participants to become professional counsellors. Counselling skills can also be used for return to work interviews, giving and receiving feedback, supervision, appraisals, dealing with poor performance and identification of training and personal development needs.

### **Course Overview:**

HR professionals and Line Managers are increasingly being asked to support employees with differing emotional and professional needs. Counselling skills are the basis for dealing with these potentially sensitive and challenging situations.

On this interactive course participants will learn practical tools and techniques which will allow them to build on their existing skills as a manager and develop those skills to a higher level. One-on-one coaching shall establish these counselling skills within the work environment and develop confidence in their use. These simple and effective tools can be used with subordinates, peers and superiors at work and in all other areas of life.

### **Key Benefits:**

- An explanation of what counselling is and what it is not
- Understand how counselling skills relate to the role of an HR professional
- Integrating counselling skills into the role of an HR professional
- How to use a simple model to manage and structure a counselling meeting
- An understanding of how to create the right atmosphere, put people at ease and establish rapport quickly
- Appreciating the difference between sympathy and empathy, and the role empathy plays in managing sensitive personnel issues professionally
- Developing the ability to listen actively and insightfully
- Understand how endings are an integral aspect of the helping process and an opportunity for growth (goal and target setting)
- Consider the difference between support and advice and know when to refer someone on for qualified support

## **Course Structure**

The full course shall comprise of five structured modules. Modules one, two and three are delivered in a classroom based learning environment. They shall be presented through a variety of teaching methods including group tuition, role-play practical's, small-group work, individual practise and experiential exercises. It is advised that these modules should be run on a weekly basis. Module four shall take place in the workplace, allowing the participant to work through live case study examples. The final module shall return to the classroom to construct clear examples based on specific participant case studies before completing the course with an overall learning review session.

## **Course Content**

### **Module One: Introduction to Counselling in the HR Environment**

What is counselling?

- The role and skills of a counsellor
- Distinguishing from other help
- Use of counselling skills in an HR environment

Establishing the relationship – individual and employee

- Building Rapport
- Self awareness
- Sharpening observation; non-verbal signals

Core conditions

- Acceptance
- Congruence
- Empathy

Introduction to counselling skills – an HR perspective

Listening

- Focusing on the person, not the problem
- Taking in the whole message: content and effect

Responding

- Focusing and Reflection
- Questioning and summarising
- Feedback as a counselling skill

## **Module Two: Counselling Skills for HR Professionals**

### The Counselling Process

- Integration of counselling skills into the HR process
- The importance of process (in relation to power and control)
- Facilitating goal and target setting

### Awareness of Self

- Self awareness, self care and self concept
- Elements of self in the counselling process

### Ethical concerns

- Issues of equal opportunity and cultural diversity
- Examining difficult dilemmas faced within an HR environment

### Managing Endings

- Managing endings as an integral part of the helping process
- Making appropriate and ethical referrals from an HR perspective.

## **Module Three: Application of Counselling Skills in an HR Environment**

### **Life Issue**

- Primary sources of tension
1. Career
    - Absence and Sickness
    - Grievance and Disciplinary
    - Welfare
    - Turnover and Retention
    - Redundancy
  2. Home
    - Bereavement
    - Family Issues
    - Financial Problems
    - Relationship Problems
    - Application of suitable counselling techniques

## **Case study examination and/or Counselling exercise**

### **Stress Management**

- Stress in the workplace
- Physical/behavioural signs
- Stress reduction planning
- Tactics to combat stress

## **Case study examination and/or Counselling exercise**

### **Module Four: Individual Coaching**

Individual one-to-one coaching sessions for each participant in their workplace. These sessions shall last for 2 hours and be based upon live HR case studies, applying the practical counselling tools and techniques acquired in modules one and two.

- Professional Preparation
- Determining the right approach
- Using counselling skills and techniques in the workplace.
- Action planning

### **Module Five: Case Studies and Learning Review**

The analysis of live participant case studies developed in module three shall provide practical examples and knowledge for the workplace. These studies shall be analysed and broken down to develop specific cases of counselling in the HR environment.

Finally, it is becoming increasingly important for organisations to be able to measure the return on investment from learning activities. We have a well-established evaluation model, used throughout the entire programme, to ensure the course has met the desired learning outcomes.

### **Case Studies**

- Deconstructing the various parts of case studies
- Constructing clear, concise examples based on counselling skills.

### **Learning Review**

- Course evaluation – measurement of learning outcomes.
- Considering opportunities for further professional and personal development