

FORWARD

Fashion, Crafts and Design for Women Empowerment

Best Practices

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FORWARD: Fashion, Crafts and Design for Women Empowerment
KA210-ADU - Small-scale partnerships in adult education
Project ID: 2021-2-IT02-KA210-ADU-000050772

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1 STANDARDS WHICH ENSURE THE DELIVERY OF A QUALITY TRAINING¹

Considering the target audience of the innovative training we plan to deliver, before proceeding with predictors and standards of quality training, special attention needs to be put on the work we will be delivering, namely social work.

1.1 GLOBAL DEFINITION OF THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION

*“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.” (definition by the International Federation of Social Workers July 2014).*²

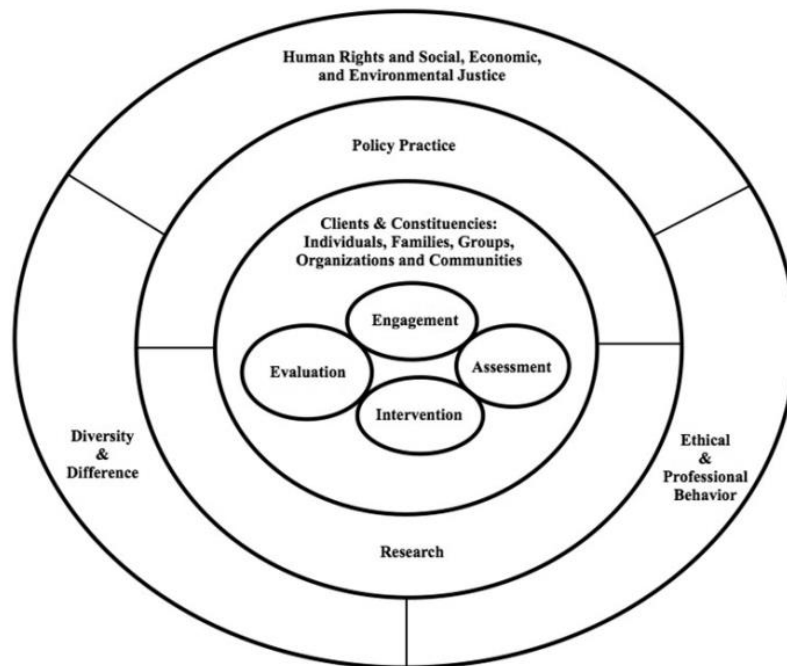


Figure 1 Social Work Competencies³

¹ Standards adapted from CDC Quality Training Standards Public Health https://youtu.be/FYD_Ka4In7o

² Check videos to meet social workers and impact on sustainability <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/meet-social-workers-from-around-the-world/>

³ Source: Perspectives Social Work Competencies and Multidimensional Assessment The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work, Vol. 20 (2015) © 2015 by the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors. <https://www.bu.edu/ssw/files/2017/07/Social-work-competencies-and-multidimensional-assessment-Poulin-and-Matis.pdf>

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1.2 Essential Skills and Traits for Social Workers⁴

Social work is a dynamic and demanding profession that requires a variety of skills and qualities. Whether these skills are innate or acquired, success in the field requires social workers to continually develop them throughout their career. While this list is not exhaustive, the following skills are vital for all social workers.

1. Empathy

Empathy is the ability to identify with and understand another person's experience and point of view. NASW defines it as "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person." ⁵ "Stepping into someone else's shoes" and recognizing that experiences, perceptions and worldviews are unique to each individual enables social workers to better understand and build stronger relationships with clients. It is a vital skill that helps social workers to determine a client's needs based on his or her unique experiences in order to efficiently provide services.

2. Communication

Communication – both verbal and non-verbal – is a vital skill for social workers. The ability to communicate clearly with a wide range of people is essential. It is the duty of social workers to advocate for their clients – in order to do this, social workers must understand the client's needs. In addition to being cognizant of body language and other non-verbal cues, this means communicating appropriately and effectively with clients regardless of cultural background, age, gender, literacy skill level or disability. Social workers must also communicate with care providers, colleagues, and agencies, and must document and report information in a clear manner.

3. Organization

Social workers have busy schedules and a wide range of responsibilities in addition to managing and supporting multiple clients, including documentation, reporting, billing and collaboration. This requires social workers to be very organized and able to prioritize clients' needs in order to effectively manage cases. Disorganization and poor time management could cause a social worker to overlook a client's needs and result in negative outcomes.

4. Critical thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information gathered from unbiased observation and communication. Social workers must be able to objectively evaluate each case by collecting information through observation, interviews and research. Thinking critically and without prejudice enables social workers to make informed decisions, identify the best resources and formulate the best plan to help clients.

5. Active listening

⁴ Source <https://socialwork.buffalo.edu/admissions/is-social-work-right-career-for-me/list-of-essential-skills-in-social-work.html>

⁵ Barker, R. L. (2003). *The Social Work Dictionary*. 5th ed. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

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Active listening is necessary for social workers to understand and identify a client's needs. Listening carefully, concentrating, asking the right questions, and utilizing techniques such as paraphrasing and summarizing also helps social workers to engage and establish trust with clients.

6. Self-care

Social work can be demanding and emotionally stressful, so it is important to engage in activities that help you to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Self-care refers to practices that help to reduce stress and improve health and well-being – engaging in these practices helps to prevent burnout and compassion fatigue and is crucial to having a sustainable career. By taking the time to care for themselves, social workers are better able to provide the best services for their clients. Learn more about self-care with our self-care starter kit.

7. Cultural competence

Working effectively with clients from diverse backgrounds requires social workers to be respectful and responsive to cultural beliefs and practices. Social workers must be knowledgeable and respectful of their clients' cultural backgrounds and must, as stated by NASW, "examine their own cultural backgrounds and identities while seeking out the necessary knowledge, skills, and values that can enhance the delivery of services to people with varying cultural experiences associated with their race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, age or disability." Possessing a non-judgmental attitude and an appreciation for diversity and the value of individual differences enables social worker to provide clients with what they need.

8. Patience

Social workers encounter an array of circumstances and individuals in their work. It is important to have patience to work through complex cases and with clients who need longer periods of time to make progress. This empowers social workers to understand the client's situation and avoid hasty decision-making and frustration that can lead to costly errors and poor outcomes for the client.

9. Professional commitment

Being successful in social work requires lifelong learning. Social workers must have a professional commitment to social work values and ethics, and to continuously developing professional competence. This commitment is necessary for fulfilling the mission of social workers – "to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty."

10. Advocacy

Social workers promote social justice and empower clients and communities through advocacy. Advocacy skills enable social workers to represent and argue for their clients and to connect them with needed resources and opportunities, especially when clients are vulnerable or unable to advocate for themselves.

1.3 Training Effectiveness Predictors

Training Effectiveness Predictors Learner characteristics, training design, and work environment predict training effectiveness. The following summarizes published evidence on training factors that have the strongest, most consistent relationship with learning and application of knowledge and skills in the

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workplace—a concept known as transfer of learning. For more information, see the Recommended Training Effectiveness Questions for Post course Evaluations User Guide⁶.

Learner Characteristics

- **Motivation:**
The level of intensity and persistence the learner directs toward learning and the application of learning. Motivated learners are more likely to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace.
- **Perceived Utility or Relevance of Training:**
Learners who see the training as useful and beneficial to their job are far more likely to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace.

Training Design

- **Behavioural Modelling:**
Learners are more likely to apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace when the instructor clearly defines desired behaviours, demonstrates these behaviours, and gives learners opportunities to practice needed behaviours.
- **Error Management:**
Learners are better equipped to handle on-the-job challenges when instructors allow them to practice problem-solving that involves anticipating, experiencing, and managing issues in the workplace.
- **Realistic Practice or Realistic Training Environments:**
Learners are more likely to engage in active learning and transfer knowledge and skills to the workplace when instructors conduct training and practice in environments that resemble the workplace.

Work Environment

- **Supportive Environment:**
Peers and supervisors enhance transfer of learning by reinforcing and supporting learners' newly acquired skills. It is especially helpful when peers and supervisors work with learners to develop action-oriented goals for applying these skills.
- **Opportunity to Perform:**
Learners need resources and opportunities to apply their new skills and abilities in the workplace.
- **Relapse Prevention Strategy:**
Follow-up (such as job aids or reminders) increases the likelihood that learners will apply their new knowledge and skills in the workplace.

These training effectiveness predictors align with several of the Quality Training Standards:

Learner Characteristics Needs Assessment (Quality Training Standard #1):

A needs assessment can provide information about your learners' level of motivation. It can also provide information that helps make a course relevant and useful to the learners.

Learning Objectives (Quality Training Standard #2):

Learning objectives help learners gauge if a training will be relevant and useful by letting them know what they will be able to accomplish by the end of the course.

Accurate and Relevant (Quality Training Standard #3):

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/training/development/evaluate/index.html#process-evaluation>

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Making training content relevant for your learners improves their likelihood of applying what they learn in the workplace. In addition, if the training is designed to be relevant, the learner may be more likely to perceive it as useful and relevant.

Training Design Accurate and Relevant (Quality Training Standard #3):

Making content relevant involves using real-world examples, scenarios, or environments to reinforce learning.

Learner Engagement (Quality Training Standard #4) and Learner Assessment (Quality Training Standard #7):

Learner engagement and learner assessment both address providing opportunities for learners to practice behaviours and receive feedback on their problem-solving skills.

Work Environment Follow-Up Support (Quality Training Standard #8): Follow-up support for the learner involves providing resources, tools, and other support, such as opportunities to apply skills to reinforce content and learning when learners return to the workplace.

1.4 QUALITY STANDARDS TRAINING CHECK LIST

1.4.1 Training needs assessment informs training development

- Ensure that training is needed to address the gap, training is not always the solution
- Conduct a needs assessment that validates the need for training.
- Consider a simple or complex approach.
 - a) Complex approaches might include collecting new data through surveys and interviews.
 - b) Simple approaches might include looking at existing data or literature or talking to a few key informants.
- Conduct a training needs analysis (e.g., see Society for Human Resource Management definition*), if training is needed. This is a part of the needs assessment and focuses on gathering information that helps with training approach.
 - a) Identify and confirm the training goal with key partners.
 - b) Assess opportunities to build trust, engage, and advance equity through training.
 - c) Identify and describe learners (and community if appropriate).
 - d) Identify barriers and facilitators for training delivery to ensure inclusion and accessibility (e.g., language, technology, or location).
- Select a delivery method(s), strategy(ies), or trainers appropriate for content and learners. Some trainings may require additional attributes.
- Consider if the following apply to your training: Identify appropriate competencies (e.g., Core Competencies for Social Workers), if relevant.
- Establish and confer with a planning committee that includes diverse and relevant representatives of the learner audience (e.g., different professions, generations, race and ethnicity, and gender identity).

1.4.2 Training includes learning objectives

- Develop learning objectives that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound).
- Match learning objectives with goals.

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- Select educational methods that support learning objectives.

Some trainings may require additional attributes. Consider if the following apply to your training:

- Match learning objectives with competencies (e.g., Core Competencies for Social Worker), if competencies exist.
- Describe prerequisite knowledge and skills and how they can be obtained.

1.4.3 Training content is accurate and relevant

- Develop content that meets the needs of the learners and program based on the needs assessment.
- Consider your learners and make sure your content (including examples and visuals) is culturally appropriate and relevant.
 - Include real-world examples that support the content.
 - Ensure content aligns with learning objectives to avoid unnecessary material.
- Conduct a subject matter expert (SME) review.
 - The SME(s) should ensure that content is accurate based on best-available evidence and up-to-date.
 - The SME(s) should review for bias and ensure possible biases are minimized and mitigated
- Create an expiration date for the training to review and update or retire, as needed.
 - Review may include evidence-based practice, peer review journals, best practices, or SMEs' input.
 - Update or remove content in a timely manner. Some trainings may require additional attributes.
- Consider if the following apply to your training:
 - Align content with at least one professional competency (e.g., Core Competencies for Social Workers), if competencies exist.
 - Ensure content offered in another language is linguistically appropriate and accurate.
 - If it was translated and not created directly in the target language, verify that it was done using standard industry translation processes and is reviewed by bilingual SMEs.

1.4.4 Training includes opportunities for learner engagement

- Design training that is interactive or engaging (e.g., knowledge checks, case studies, question and answer sessions, or exercises), as appropriate for learners' needs and training goals.
- Provide opportunity for learners to receive feedback.
- Facilitate engagement activities in a manner that is inclusive of all learners.

Some trainings may require additional attributes. Consider if the following apply to your training:

- Use adult learning principles for adult learners (<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/adult-learning-principles.pdf>)
 - Principle #1: Adults are internally motivated and self-directed.
 - Principle #2: Adults need to draw upon their own life experiences and knowledge.
 - Principle #3: Adults are goal-oriented. Adults appreciate learning when it is tied to specific professional or personal goals.
 - Principle #4: Adults are relevancy-oriented. Adults must be able to see how learning connects to their work.
 - Principle #5: Adults are practical. Adults will want to focus on those aspects That will help them solve problems in their work.
 - Principle #6: Adults need to be shown respect.

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- Include experiential or practice-based learning (e.g. internship with a mentor for on-the-job learning). Provide opportunity for learners to share experiences and learn from others' experiences. These may include peer learning and interdisciplinary opportunities for practice.

1.4.5 Training is designed for usability and accessibility

- Use conversational style that is appropriate for learners (i.e., active voice, present tense, and second person).
- Use language and tone that is inclusive, familiar, and clear for learners.
- Select media, interface, and educational methods that can be used by your audience and facilitates learning (e.g., some learners may not have reliable internet access).
 - Design for user experience.
 - Develop easy and user-friendly navigation or materials.
 - Ensure that navigation or materials allow learners flexibility to access content that they need.
 - Organize concepts in logical sections.
- Make content accessible to learners.

Some trainings may require additional attributes. Consider if the following apply to your training:

- Use high-quality (e.g., clear, clean, and crisp) audio and visual aids to clarify concepts.
- Use technology that is current and easy to access.
 - Ensure that links are functional.
 - Provide technical support.

1.4.6 Training evaluation informs improvement

- Develop and implement a training evaluation plan that includes the evaluation purpose, questions, and data collection methods.
- Recruit evaluation participants who reflect the diversity of your learner audience to ensure cultural, social, and contextual relevance.
- Conduct a formative evaluation as part of development. This may include peer review, quality checklist assessment (e.g., using a checklist), pilot testing, or usability testing.
- Conduct outcome evaluation that includes training effectiveness and learner assessment (Standard 7).
- Include opportunity for learners to provide feedback on training.
 - Include open-ended feedback, if possible.
 - Review and analyse evaluation data for training improvement.
 - Plan to use process evaluation data and learner feedback for ongoing quality improvement.
 - Make recommendations for training content, delivery methods, and learning activities that fill gaps with focus on areas with greatest need, including the need to advance equity.

Some trainings may require additional attributes. Consider if the following apply to your training:

- Conduct a delayed or follow-up evaluation after learners have had time to apply what they learned.
- Assess if the training is inclusive and supports cultural and linguistic standards.

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1.4.7 Training includes opportunity for learner assessment

- Construct learner assessments (e.g. post-test, knowledge check, exercise, observed practice, question and answer session, or problem solving) that relate directly to learning objectives to reinforce learning.
 - Use different question formats, such as multiple choice, matching, listing, reordering, and sorting.
- Use socially and contextually relevant assessments for learners to apply what they have learned (e.g., case scenarios are realistic and relevant to learners).
- Provide learners with feedback on their responses or skill demonstration to support learning.

Some trainings may require additional attributes.

Consider if the following applies to your training:

- Recognize learner completion through a certificate or other notification.

1.4.8 Training includes follow-up support for the learner

- Provide opportunities to learners for continued learning after the training that reinforces retention and application of content delivered during training.
- Use a simple or complex approach that includes at least one resource for post training support.
 - Simple approaches include providing contact information for help, tip sheets and other resources for more information, and access to other learners for peer support.
 - Complex approaches include conference calls, webcasts, coaching, homework assignments, accountability partners, communities of practice, and reminders such as emails and quizzes provided some time after the training.
 - Choose an approach that is socially and contextually relevant to learners (e.g., consider learners' availability and access to technology).

Some trainings may require additional attributes.

Consider if the following applies to your training:

- Provide resources to management or partner organizations for follow-up support.

1.4.9 Resources

- 5 levels of professional development evaluation: <https://evalu-ate.org/miscellaneous/five-levels-of-professional-development-evaluation/>
- Evaluating Training Effectiveness: <https://www.cdc.gov/training/development/evaluate/training-effectiveness.html#print>
- Useful models on how to manage across-cultures <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=53>
 - [ADDRESSING Framework](#)
 - [Arthur Kleinman's Eight Questions](#)
 - [Providing CLAS](#) (culturally and linguistically appropriate services)
 - [CLAS, Cultural Competency, And Cultural Humility](#)
 - [Combating Implicit Bias And Stereotypes](#)
 - [Communication Styles](#)
 - [Effective Cross-Cultural Communications Skills](#)

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- [How To Better Understand Different Social Identities](#)
- [RESPECT Model](#)
- [Working Effectively With An Interpreter](#)
- Usability testing: <https://www.usability.gov/>
- What is social work <https://www.ifsw.org/what-is-social-work/meet-social-workers-from-around-the-world/>

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