

NEGATIVE PERSUASION EXERCISE 2

USE THESE ROADBLOCKS TO INTERRUPT THE PATIENT FLOW
AND SHUT DOWN THE CONVERSATION

Twelve Roadblocks to Listening

(Thomas Gordon, Ph.D.)

1. Ordering, directing, or commanding
2. Warning or threatening
3. Giving advice, making suggestions, or providing solutions
4. Persuading with logic, arguing, or lecturing
5. Moralizing, preaching, or telling clients what they "should" do
6. Disagreeing, judging, criticizing, or blaming
7. Agreeing, approving, or praising
8. Shaming, ridiculing, or labeling
9. Interpreting or analyzing
10. Reassuring, sympathizing, or consoling
11. Questioning or probing
12. Withdrawing, distracting, humoring, or changing the subject

Negative Practice Example 1: Persuasion Exercise

This is an exercise for dyads, in which one person is the speaker and the other the counselor. The speaker talks about a topic of ambivalence – something he or she is thinking about changing, or “should” change, or might want to do. The counselor uses a variety of methods to try to directly persuade the speaker to make the change. It is important to instruct the audience that this is *not* motivational interviewing, and that the counselors are not to be empathic listeners in this exercise.

Speaker role: Identify a change that you are *considering*, something you are *thinking about* changing in your life, but have not definitely decided. It will be something you feel two ways about. It might be a change that would be “good for you,” that you “should” make for some reason, but have been putting off. Tell the Counselor about this change you are considering. [Trainer: “Speakers, this time I would like you to talk about something you have been thinking about changing in your own life. It could be a habit, attitude or behavior, but it should be something you haven’t changed yet. Maybe it’s something that would be *good* for you, or that you think you *should* change. It should be something you feel comfortable sharing -- not your deepest, darkest secret, okay? Any questions about that?”]

Counselor role: Your task is to try as hard as you can to *convince* and *persuade* the Speaker to make the change that he or she is considering. (This is *not* a motivational interviewing exercise.) Fit in as many of the following persuasion tactics as you can in the short time allotted:

Ask Questions. Why hasn’t the Speaker made the change? What stands in the way of making the change?

Advise. Directly advise the Speaker make the change, and discourage him or her from delaying or not changing.

Explain why it is important for the Speaker to make the change.

Warn the Speaker what may happen if the change is not made.

Make Suggestions as to how the Speaker could go about making the change.

Direct or tell the Speaker what to do, perhaps in “should” or “must” language.

Refute. Disagree -- offer logical counter-argument -- if the Speaker resists or gives excuses.

Analyze what the Speaker’s real issues or conflict may be. Give your interpretation of why the Speaker hasn’t changed.

Reassure the Speaker that he or she will be successful in making the change.

The exercise can also be done as a role-play in which each participant is assigned a situational identity.