

Coaching skill: The art of acknowledgement

When you use acknowledgement, you help clients connect with their strengths and values.

Acknowledgment is one of the most powerful coaching skills for assisting the client in accessing their essential self and personal power. Acknowledgment shines the light on “who” clients are being in that moment. It points out qualities they visibly demonstrate or values they are honouring.

Try to use acknowledgement at least once per session:

- Keep it simple and specific. Vague acknowledgment is not very powerful.
- Focus on the qualities or values of who clients are being.
- Be honest, sincere, and appropriate.
- Do NOT provide an explanation or expect a thank you. If there is silence, move on with the coaching.
- Do NOT acknowledge outcomes. Listen for the effort clients are exerting, and offer acknowledgement for the efforts the client has made.

Examples:

- “Amira, congratulations for keeping your commitment to making regular payments to reduce your debt.”
- “Harry, you’ve spent a lot of effort tracking your expenses since the last meeting, this shows a lot of resourcefulness and perseverance.”
- “Lee, I can see that you’re honouring your family with the savings goals you’re planning.”

What ways can you think of to acknowledge a client in an up coming session?



Tip: Also share acknowledgement with fellow staff or other service providers. It is a powerful tool and helps them serve their clients well when they feel acknowledged for the work they do.