

Code of Ethics for Counselors

1. If you have concerns or complaints about a colleague's job, go first to the person individually and voice your concerns or complaints. Do not talk about criticisms you have of a colleague in public, or with another person.
2. After you have spoken with a colleague individually with legitimate concerns or complaints about his/ her job, if you still have problems, tell the colleague that you are going to speak to his/her supervisor and then speak to the supervisor in private. Do not discuss a colleague's job performance in public.
3. Support and nurture colleagues' jobs. Do not criticize a colleague's abilities or skills; their supervisor will provide constructive feedback as required.
4. Focus only on the present working relationship if you feel you must speak with an employee about their job. Do not refer to things that happened previously and are unrelated to the problem at hand.
5. Consider that all colleagues are just as good at their job as you are at yours; work level on level. Do not take a superior attitude over a colleague.
6. Colleagues need to trust each other's decisions about their own work plan and help support each other's work plans. Do not evaluate a colleague's work plan unless asked to do so by the colleague; that is the job of the supervisor.
7. Counselors need to think only about the number of clients coming to see them; they have no business knowing anything about another counselor's client load, unless the two counselors have agreed to share this information in a trusting and supportive way. Only a supervisor has the right to comment on the number of clients being seen by a counselor.
8. Respect the fact that each individual counselor has his/her own strengths and his/her own weaknesses. Do not compare one counselor with another, particularly with a predecessor in the same job.
9. All counselors are equally responsible for helping community members. For example, the suicide prevention worker cannot stop all suicides. Do not transfer the blame, or for community members' problems onto a fellow counselor. Each person in the community is responsible for his/ her own choices.
10. Balance criticism or negative comments with positive comments if you are telling a colleague your criticisms. Do not focus only on negative aspects when talking to a colleague.