

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

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In order to provide sound direct service, evaluate agency effectiveness or serve as a representative of your agency, it is imperative for you to have a thorough understanding of many aspects of agency functioning. When beginning your practicum (or any new job), it is important that you learn as much about your position and your agency as quickly as you can. When you can answer the questions below you will have a good grasp of your agency's role and your role in the agency. Your understanding will be achieved through observation, questioning, reading agency policy and procedures and becoming actively involved in your field practicum. A thorough understanding will take months, so start on this exercise soon. Class assignments and discussions will address many of these topics too; thinking about them now will give you an "edge" later.

## **PURPOSE, FUNCTION & STRUCTURE OF YOUR AGENCY**

1. What is the purpose of your agency?
2. How is this purpose legally spelled out?
3. What segments of the community support this program?
4. How was your agency established?
5. What services does your agency provide?
6. Describe the formal structure of your agency? (Draw an organization chart, if this will help)
7. How many workers are employed in your agency?
8. What is the informal structure of your agency? (You will be better able to answer this question later in the semester.)
9. How is your agency funded? Does it receive public and/or private funds?
10. What is your total agency budget? How is this budget distributed among the various programs?
11. How is your agency related to the other social welfare agencies and services in the community?

## **SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN THE AGENCY**

In this section, base your observations, examples and thoughts on your own practice as much as possible.

1. What seems to be the underlying rationale for the process, methods and techniques used in your agency?
2. How are workers trained in your program?
3. Is there an on-going, in-service training program?
4. How is the social work process measured and evaluated?
5. What kind of knowledge and skills are you called upon to know and use in your social work practice?
6. What are the trends in the methods used by the agency and what has brought this about?
7. In what ways do the clientele of the agency influence the selection of methods? Their implementation and outcomes?
8. What methods of supervision are used? Is supervision provided to all workers or only new workers?

## **CLIENTS**

1. Who gets defined as a client?
2. Who cannot be a client?
3. What are the differences between the two groups?
4. How do the problems of client get defined in your agency?
5. What is the process by which individuals or families become clients of the agency?
6. What are the characteristics of the clientele?
7. How do the characteristics influence the method and ways the agency has for helping, the goals of the agency, and the role of the client?
8. What must the client do to remain a client in the agency?
9. How are services to the client terminated?
10. What provisions for client feedback and input into agency decision making are made?