Evidence-Based Practice

The recent push toward evidence-based practice (EBP) has brought new attention to correctional practice. EBP stresses that the programs and services we offer to offenders should be those that are related to subsequent reductions in recidivism (e.g., readmission, reincarceration). Research suggests that effective correctional programs share similar characteristics in terms of targeting offender risk, needs, and responsivity. For instance, a number of studies show that programs that match higher-risk offenders to more intensive services (e.g., risk) and address dynamic criminogenic factors (e.g., needs) can significantly reduce recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews, Zinger, Louden, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007). This is usually introduced as a set of stylistic principles. However, there has been much less research on the EBP principle of responsibility, which suggests that providers interact with offenders in ways that will effectively engage the offender. In placing Motivational Interviewing (MI) within an EBP framework, MI is best understood in terms of its consistency with the responsibility principle, because it suggests a way of talking with offenders to increase motivation for change.

Role of the Probation Officer

For those placed on supervision, probation officers are the main brokers of the probation process. Probation officers meet regularly with offenders, conduct intake and other assessments, report to the court on progress, and have a degree of latitude on the intensity of monitoring and programs to which offenders are referred. Thus, from a systemic standpoint, probation officers are uniquely situated to function as change agents who prepare an offender motivationally to comply with conditions of probation, engage in special programs, and make other positive changes. There has long been evidence that brief interactions can significantly influence client outcome (Miller, 2000; Moyser, Finney, Sweating, & Vegun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002), and recent evidence suggests that the relationship between an officer and the offender can be “a pivotal source of influence on the implementation of treatment mandates” (Skeem, Encandela, and Vergun, 2002).

Motivational Interviewing in Criminal Justice

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a communication style that involves strategic use of questions and statements to help clients find their own reasons for change (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). MI borrows from Client-Centered Counseling in its emphasis on empathy, optimism, and respect for client choice (Rogers, 1961). MI also draws from Self-Perception Theory, which says that people become more or less interested in change based on how they talk about it (Bem, 1972). Thus, an offender who talks about the benefits of change is more likely to make that change, whereas an offender who argues and defends the status quo is more likely to continue in the present behavior. Finally, MI is also logically connected to the Stages of Change model, which says that people go through a sequence of stages when considering change (Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992). Although MI seems to work well throughout the change process, research suggests that it may be particularly useful for clients who are more oppositional or defiant, higher-risk, or otherwise less ready for change.

Because MI is a communication style, it is usually introduced as a set of stylistic prin-
As a problem. In another study, first-time DWI offenders (N=3), DWI offenses that are specific to probation settings. A comparatively little research on the use of MI in areas of behavior change, there has been considerable research support in areas such as alcohol and drug use, smoking cessation, medication compliance, HIV risk behaviors, and diet/exercise. Across a range of behavioral areas, MI was significantly better than other approaches in three out of four studies, and outperformed traditional advice-giving 80 percent of the time. Even when looking at very brief encounters of 15 minutes or less, 64 percent of participants who did not receive treatment. MI is collaborative, evocative, and a community corrections, such as preparing clients for the justice setting, and a community corrections program result in greater reductions in substance use and treatment retention. MI stresses that denial, argumentation, and resistance—the client begins to tell you all the reasons they can’t change. When done at the appropriate time, the focus can move from motivation to a concrete plan for change. It again involves careful listening to what clients are saying. One way to “tip the balance” toward change is to ask an action question about change (e.g., “What do you want to do about that? What’s your plan?”). Offenders are more likely to evoke the opposite of what they say if they are asked questions that are common to people who break the law. MI is neutral on the question of whether officers have authority to do that (e.g., “You’re really frustrated. You feel that your conviction makes it more difficult to get a job. Nobody’s going to hire a felon.”). MI focuses on the context of the offender’s own reasons for change, and support. Feedback is critical to MI, most typically through one-to-one counseling (Armhein et al., 2003). This MI involves checking for errors in a pushy, confrontational style is likely to evoke the opposite of what the officer is hoping for; the harder the officer confronts, the harder the offender resists. MI supports messages that reduce resistance, which in the past were assumed to be a hallmark of an unprovoked client, are instead largely a function of the provider’s communication style. To minimize resistance toward change, officers first try to avoid arguments wherever possible. Officers can also use other strategies such as offering reflections (e.g., “It makes you angry, because you don’t want to do it. If I can help you by sug- gesting the officer’s choice and control (e.g., “Ultimately, it’s your choice. What do you want to do here?”), or reframing the resistance (e.g., “It does bother you that people are in your business, but I appreciate the fact that you’re taking it seriously.”). This skill is probably one of the most difficult ones for officers, because we get stuck in trying to refuse client resistance. In training, this is emphasized through practice responding to hypothetical client statements. It can be strengthened through examining audio and videotapes to see how and why arguments occur. Stages 6 and 7: Developing and Con- solidating Commitment to Change As talk changes more about future change, the officer can move from reinforcing change talk to developing a plan for change. It can be difficult to know when to push a client toward plan- ning, because moving too early may cause resistance. To help you tell you all the reasons they can’t change. But when done at the appropriate time, the focus can move from motivation to a concrete plan for change. It again involves careful listening to what clients are saying. One way to “tip the balance” toward change is to ask an action question about change (e.g., “What do you want to do about that? 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There are many beginnings in addiction counseling. MI has been translated into a number of behavior-change areas. MI currently has strong research support in areas such as alcohol and drug use, smoking cessation, medication compliance, HIV risk behaviors, and diet/exercise.

Two recent meta-analyses of more than 70 MI outcome studies in different areas suggest an overall significant and clinically-relevant effect (Hettema, Steele, & Miller, 2005; Rubak, Sandbook, Lauritzen, & Christensen, 2005).

Across a range of behavioral areas, MI was significantly better than other approaches in three out of four studies, and outperformed traditional approaches, about twice as much of the time. Even when looking at very brief encounters of 15 minutes or less, 64 percent of studies showed a lasting effect using this method. Overall, one review concluded that MI “outperforms traditional advice giving in the treatment of a broad range of behavioral problems” (Rubak et al., 2005, p. 305).

Although MI has good support in many areas of behavior change, there has been continued debate over the role of the MI style in criminal justice settings, and even fewer studies that are specific to probation settings. A recent review focusing specifically on MI in criminal justice (Anderson, 2000) identified 19 studies where MI was used to target substance-misusing offenders (N=10), domestic-violence offenders (N=3), DWI offenders (N=5) and general offending (N=1). The review concluded that MI is beneficial for retaining treatment, enhanced motivation to change, and reduced offending, although there were variations across studies. As an example, Ginzburg et al. (2000) randomized prison inmates with alcohol problems to MI or control groups. Compared to control participants, those who received a motivational interview showed increased recognition of their drinking behavior as a problem. In another study, first-time DWI offenders with a 28-day incarceration sentence were randomized to receive or not receive a treatment program that included MI techniques emphasizing avoiding arguments whenever possible and finding other ways to respond when challenged; 3) Develop Dissonance, which involves encouraging the offender’s own reasons for change; and 4) Support Self-Efficacy, which emphasizes positive language and an environment that is supportive of change.

Many criminal justice agencies, convinced of the utility of MI, have begun training officers in MI, most typically through one- to two-day workshop trainings. However, most agencies have not always fully appreciated the complexity involved in learning MI. In fact, there is good evidence that the typical one- to two- day training workshop may not be the ideal format for learning MI (Walters, Matson, Anderton, & Kloucek, 2003). Rather, it appears that competency in the MI style is achieved through long-term training that involves skill practice and feedback. This article describes the theoretical underpinnings of learning MI and, based on this model, provides a rationale and plan for implementation of MI training within a criminal justice setting.

The Eight Stages of Learning Motivational Interviewing

In 2006, Bill Miller and Teresa Moyers outlined eight critical stages in learning MI (Miller and Moyers, 2006). These stages are considered sequential and outline the spirit, skills, and strategies necessary to become proficient in MI. Our plan for MI training draws from the training literature (Walters et al., 2005), as well as this stage model.

Stage 1: The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing.

At its heart, MI is collaborative, evocative, and respectful of autonomy (Miller and Moyers, 2006, p. 5). The officer respects the individual’s autonomy (even though he/she may not agree with the choices the offender makes) and approaches the relationship as a collaborative one. This spirit is difficult for some officers to achieve, particularly in the early stages of learning MI, as the officer confronts, the harder the offender resists. MI stresses that denial, argumentation, and resistance, which in the past were assumed to be a hallmark of an unmotivated client, are instead largely a function of the provider’s communication style. To minimize resistance toward change, officers first try to avoid arguments wherever possible. Officers can also use other strategies such as offering reflections (e.g., “It makes you angry, because you feel that you’re losing control”), reframing the interviewer’s point of view; 2) Roll with Resistance, which emphasizes avoiding arguments whenever possible and finding other ways to respond when challenged; 3) Develop Dissonance, which involves encouraging the offender’s own reasons for change; and 4) Support Self-Efficacy, which emphasizes positive language and an environment that is supportive of change.

The MI strategy of “rolling” with resistance involves empathic listening and reframing the client’s resistance, which in the past were assumed to be a hallmark of an unmotivated client, are instead largely a function of the provider’s communication style. To minimize resistance toward change, officers first try to avoid arguments wherever possible. Officers can also use other strategies such as offering reflections (e.g., “It makes you angry, because you feel that you’re losing control”), reframing the interviewer’s point of view; 2) Roll with Resistance, which emphasizes avoiding arguments whenever possible and finding other ways to respond when challenged; 3) Develop Dissonance, which involves encouraging the offender’s own reasons for change; and 4) Support Self-Efficacy, which emphasizes positive language and an environment that is supportive of change.

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and consolidating “commitment talk,” usu-
ally in the form of “I will” statements.

Stage 6: Switching Between MI and Other Approaches
MI is geared toward motivating behavior change, such as decreasing alcohol or drug use, finding employment, paying fees, or other probation conditions. MI may also be useful for increasing the likelihood that an individual will participate in subsequent interventions. For instance, several studies have shown that use of MI prior to substance abuse treatment increases the retention rate while in treatment (i.e., fewer individuals drop out of treatment). In addition to behavior change, there may be other tasks that the officer needs to accomplish such as assessing progress, conveying information, assessing risk, or disputing functions. Even while focusing more narrowly on behavior change, MI is frequently integrated into other approaches such as cognitive behavioral tech-
niques, skills training, or education. Differ-
ent tasks might call for different techniques, but the overall style need not change (see Walters et al., 2007). Finally, MI also needs to be integrated into overall session manage-
ment. No matter what the approach, officers have to make decisions about what topics are important at this moment, and what can be left for later. In our opinion, decisions about when to use or not use MI are best addressed through case planning, ongoing supervision and case reviews.

Motivational Interviewing Training: A Model Plan
As might be gleaned from the description above, learning MI can be more difficult than it appears. With the increase in training over the past five years, many officers have now been exposed to at least some of the tenets of MI, but very few have actually learned the skills in a comprehensive way. This may be partially due to the training models that are frequently used by agencies. Though some criminal jus-
tice agencies have attempted to train officers through discrete one- or two-day workshops, research suggests that such workshops do not often result in long-term skill changes (Wal-
ter, Matson, Baer, and Ziedonis, 2005). Al-
though participants report an increase in knowledge or self-reported skill following brief workshops, measures of actual inter-

TABLE 1
Summary of Model Implementation Plan

Table: Pre-training
1. All districts must go through the Intro to MI training.

MI Trainer Qualifications:
1. MI Trainer has completed M1 training from a MNT certified or reputable trainer. Please contact Scott VanHee Chen or Melissa Call for guidance.

MI Trainer must have extensive experience training probation/parole officers.

Structure:
1. If possible, the MI trainer should conduct an overview and strategic planning session with supervisors and managers regarding the District’s plan for implementation of MI.
2. Supervisors must be trained in basic MI. This training can occur in advance or in conjunction with officer training.
3. Supervisors must be trained to coach/supervise other learning MI.
4. All officers participating in MI should attend at least 2 days of initial MI training.
5. Following initial training, officers should receive monthly coaching/feedback sessions.
6. Sessions should include a review of an audio and/or videotape of officer-defendant/ officer interactions that include the use of MI to facilitate behavior change. Officers should be encouraged to review the tape themselves prior to the coaching session.
7. Booster MI sessions for both supervisors and officers should be held at the 6 and 12 month milestones. It is preferable to use the original trainer for these sessions.
8. Monthly feedback sessions should be led by someone proficient in MI. Ideally, districts will utilize their MI trainer to train an internal supervisor and/or officer mon-
tor to become proficient in coaching MI.
9. Monthly feedback sessions should focus on building MI skills, utilizing a format such as the ones included.
10. Informal ratings of MI skills can be made and used as feedback during the monthly sessions, using one of the attached formats.
11. Once an officer feels comfortable enough to receive feedback on MI, he/she should submit a taped interaction for formal MI feedback. The coding must be done by someone other than the original trainer or monthly coach. If the officer achieves a rating of beginning proficiency on the MITI, he/she may opt to discontinue monthly coaching sessions. However, if it is strongly recommended that officers continue receiving coaching until they reach the MI “competency” standard.
12. Once minimum standards are achieved, it is still recommended that coaching ses-
sions occur at least quarterly.

Measurement:
1. All officers will complete the Officer Responses Questionnaire before and after MI training sessions (initial and booster).
Motivational Interviewing: A Model Plan

As might be gleaned from the description above, learning MI can be more difficult than it appears. With the increase in training over the past five years, many officers have now been exposed to at least some of the tenets of MI, though few have likely used these skills in a comprehensive way. This may be partially due to the training models that are frequently used by agencies. Though some criminal justice agencies have attempted to train officers through discrete one- or two-day workshops, research suggests that such workshops do not often result in long-term skill changes (Walters, Matson, Baer, and Ziedonis, 2005). Although participants report an increase in knowledge or self-reported skill following brief workshops, measures of actual intervention actions show much more modest gains (e.g., Miller and Mount, 2001). If the goal is to have officers who are using MI in a comprehensive, effective way, a more useful training format appears to be a workshop followed by feedback and/or coaching (Miller, Yahne, Moyers, Martinez, and Pittirana, 2004).

To ensure comprehensive training for those districts interested in receiving it, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AO), with guidance from several expert MI trainers, developed a model implementation plan (see Table 1; the entire plan is available from the first author). The plan begins with a brief overview of evidence-based practice for officers to relate MI to the overall model of EBIP and understand its role in effective supervision. Next, officers attend a two- or three-day workshop on basic MI skills. The plan emphasizes that the workshop trainer must be both qualified to train MI and familiar with its impact on the AO. The Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT; www.motivationalinterviewing.org) provides a list of trainers who have demonstrated competence in MI and completed a thorough training for trainers.

As part of the initial implementation of this training plan, we asked officers to complete the Roter Responses Questionnaire (Walters et al., in press) before and after the initial two-day training, in order to evaluate gains as a result of attending the introductory workshop. On a sample of 80 officers in five districts, we found that officers increased their overall ORQ score by 68 percent, suggesting that officers did improve their basic listening skills as a result of attending the initial training.

Following the initial training, officers submit audio or videotapes of their use of MI with clients and receive feedback on their skill development. Feedback is given using one of several different rating sheets that have been developed by various MI trainers, the system of Mutual Learning Techniques (MLT; Walters et al., 2007). The plan outlines a formal coding system, the Motivational Interviewing Treatment Integrity (MITI; Moyers, Martin, Marcus, & Miller, 2003) to determine when officers reach proficiency in MI. This formal coding process allows districts to adequately document officers’ skill level and ensure that they are effectively “doing” MI. Once an entire district demonstrates officer proficiency in MI, it can then move to evaluating the impact of MI on offender behavior.

The Model Implementation Plan and accompanying resources (i.e. feedback sheets, coding system) are designed to help districts receiving Research to Results grant funding from the AO, and grantees were required to follow the plan. However, the plan is considered optional; districts may choose to use it or not, and it is continuously revised based on feedback from the districts utilizing the plan. For instance, the original plan called for first-line supervisors to provide coaching/feedback. Officers, however, discovered that such supervision did not help them to have the experience to provide competent MI supervision. Thus, the plan was revised to indicate that feedback sessions should be provided by someone already qualified to supervise MI. Additionally, districts were encouraged to develop internal capacity for MI coaching/mentoring. The AO has also provided grant funding by providing additional trainings to grant districts focused on developing MI coaches.

Future Directions
MI is intended as an additional tool for officers to use as they provide supervision and services to offenders. MI is not a replacement for everything officers currently use; nor is it appropriate for all situations following MI is still in its infancy as it relates to criminal justice, though many research projects under way are focused on better understanding the role and effectiveness of MI in criminal justice settings (see Walters et al., 2007). The training plan outlined here was developed to ensure quality training of federal probation officers, in order to increase the likelihood that officers become proficient in the techniques of MI. The authors hope that the plan will continue to be informed by the experience of officers utilizing the plan, with modifications occurring as needed. There are also plans to develop outcome measures to determine the impact MI has on the supervision process. Ultimately, the goal of all EBIP is to increase the safety of the community by providing the most effective supervision and programs available.

References
tion work? A clinically relevant and psycho-
logical informed meta-analysis. Crimi-

TABLE 1 Summary of Model Implementation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Training</th>
<th>MI Trainer Qualifications</th>
<th>MI Trainer Responsibilities</th>
<th>MI Trainer</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All districts must go through the Intro to EBIP 2-hour presentation</td>
<td>2. MI Trainer has completed basic training from a MI-certified trainer or has completed an equivalent workshop</td>
<td>3. MI Trainer must have extensive experience training probation/pretrial officers</td>
<td>4. MI Trainer must be trained in supervision of probation/pretrial officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. All officers participating in MI training should attend at least 2 days of initial MI training</td>
<td>7. The initial feedback sessions should be led by someone proficient in MI. Ideally, the AO should use someone proficient in MI.</td>
<td>8. MI Trainer must be trained to coach/supervise others learning MI.</td>
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MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI) is a style of interaction intended to help individuals resolve ambivalence about behavior change (Miller & Baca, 1983; Miller & Rollnick, 2002). It involves a collaborative partnership between the provider and client, a focus on drawing out internal motivation for change, and a respect for the client’s right and capacity to choose what to do about his/her problematic behavior. Although originally developed as a counseling intervention for substance abuse, MI has broadened into areas such as HIV risk behaviors, medication compliance, criminal justice, and other behavioral areas (Hettema, Steele, & Miller, 2005; Rubak, Sandboek, Lauritzen, & Christensen, 2005). Two recent meta-analyses found an overall significant effect of MI (Hettema et al., 2005; Rubak et al., 2005). In 70 published studies, MI was significantly better than other approaches in three out of four studies, and outperformed traditional advice-giving in 80 percent of studies (Rubak et al., 2005).

In the push toward evidence-based practice, MI has gained attention in the criminal justice arena, as practitioners recognize the need to actively engage offenders in order to encourage behavior change. Broadly speaking, MI is consistent with the responsivity principle because it suggests an interaction style that helps motivate clients for change (Walters, Clark, Gingerich, & Meltzer, 2007). Among the more than 180 published trials of MI (www.motivationalinterviewing.org), there are also a handful of studies suggesting that MI can improve criminal justice outcomes (Mcmurran, in press). However, in translating research into practice, some have questioned whether MI needs to be modified to meet the unique role of probation officers. One difficulty has to do with the dual role of the probation officer. Specifically, in contrast to counselors and healthcare workers who are mainly concerned about the well-being of a client, probation officers are tasked with two sometimes competing roles—protecting society and working collaboratively with the offender. Another difficulty in translating MI into a probation setting involves the kind of interactions that officers tend to have with probationers. Compared to counseling interactions, probation interactions tend to be brief, multi-focused, and balanced with an assessment of progress. Finally, there is a need to identify the most effective ways of teaching and assessing the specific skills that are most valuable in this setting.

In their MI training model, Miller, and Moyers (2006) propose an eight-stage learning model, starting with a foundation in the spirit of MI and then moving to client-centered counseling skills, most importantly the skill of accurate empathy, followed by other stages (recognition of client speech, eliciting/strengthening change talk, rolling with resistance, negotiating change plans, consolidating client commitment, switching flexibly between MI and other styles). They stress that the ability to listen empathically is a foundational skill of MI, no matter what the setting. In the MI model, empathic listening involves an active interest in understanding what the client is saying, including drawing out the client’s own motivations, thoughts, or plans for change. Empathy is specifically differentiated from warmth, approval or genuineness; rather, it involves a curiosity and deep understanding of the client’s perspective. Although some probation officers may come to the table with a natural ability to listen empathically, there is also evidence that accurate empathy is a skill that can be learned (e.g., Miller & Baca, 1983). Along these lines, several instruments have been developed to rate reflective listening and other aspects of MI practice (see Madison & Campbell, 2006 for a review). These instruments can be used to measure gains after training or for ongoing supervision or quality control. Some instruments ask providers to respond to written (Miller, Hedrick, & Orlofsky, 1991) or videotaped (Rosengren, Baer, Hartzler, Dunn, & Wells, 2005) scenarios, while others rate audio or videotapes of actual client interactions (Miller, 2000; Moyers, Martin, & Miller, 2003). However, none have been specifically designed to rate probation interactions.

The Helpful Responses Questionnaire (HRQ) was developed by Miller and colleagues to measure the ability to respond empathically (Miller et al., 1991). The HRQ...