

Lab 2, Activity 7: Building Rapport
CPI Interview with Angry Parent, Version A and Version B Transcript

FIRST VERSION

Parent: I want to know what the hell the meaning of this letter is. I want to know what this says.

CPI: Well I went by your house to try to talk with you in person but you weren't there so I had to send you the letter.

Parent: Okay we've got that established, that you want to see me. Now I want to know why?

CPI: Well we've had a report somebody is concerned about how you manage your child.

Parent: You know what I think about this letter? How dare you? How dare you accuse me of beating my child?

CPI: I'm not accusing you it's just that we've gotten a report.

Parent: You've got some kind of nerve sending me a threatening letter saying I have to come down here.

CPI: Miss Fowler I didn't mean the letter to sound threatening.

Parent: Well it does. Where do you get off accusing me of beating my kid?

CPI: I'm not accusing you of anything, it's just that we got a report.

Parent: From who? Who says I beat my kid?

CPI: I can't tell you that the information is confidential

Parent: Confidential?

CPI: Yes.

Parent: Someone accuses me of child abuse and I don't have a right to know who?

CPI: Look Miss Fowler I don't like this anymore than you do, but I've got to investigate any complaint about child abuse that I get. Things will go a lot smoother if you'll just calm down and cooperate so we can get to the bottom of this.

Parent: Get to the bottom of what? There's nothing to get to the bottom of. I don't beat my daughter.

CPI: Tell me how you do discipline your child.

Parent: Discipline? I hardly ever have to discipline my child. She's a good kid she hardly ever does anything wrong.

SECOND VERSION

Parent: I want to know what the hell the meaning of this letter is. I want to know what this says.

CPI: I tried to come by your house and talk with you a couple of times so that we could talk in person, rather than me having to send a letter, but since I missed you I did have to send the letter. I know it must have come as a pretty big surprise to you get that letter in the mail.

Parent: You're damn right it came as a surprise, I can't believe this. You're accusing me of beating my kid.

CPI: I know you must be pretty upset to think that somebody thinks you've been hurting your daughter.

Parent: How'd you feel if you got a letter like that?

CPI: I think I'd feel pretty upset. You know I really wish that I had been able to catch you at home so that we could have talked in person about this in the beginning, but I'm glad that you're able to come in today so that we can talk about it.

Parent: You mentioned something in this letter about a report

CPI: Mm hm.

Parent: I want to know who made that report.

CPI: Miss Fowler, I'm not going to be able to tell you that. There's a law that says that people who report possible cases of child abuse have the right to remain confidential or remain anonymous so that I'm not going to be able to tell you that information.

Parent: You mean someone can report me for child abuse and I don't have the right to know who it is?

CPI: I know it sounds really unfair.

Parent: It is unfair. Do you know why I'm living by myself with this little girl? Do you know why I have to get a monthly check from your office? Her father beat this child when she was two years old and I left him for it and now somebody has the nerve to accuse me of the same thing I left him for?

CPI: You really care a lot about your daughter Miss fowler, I can see that.

Parent: I do, I really do and I can't believe anyone would say I don't.

CPI: Well you know, sometimes people have really different ideas about raising children. Sometimes what seems like excessive discipline to one person doesn't seem excessive to somebody else. Sometimes we get reports in and there's nothing to them but sometimes we get reports and there really is something going on. Maybe there's a lot of strain in the family, the parents are under a lot of pressure and maybe they're doing things that they don't even like that they're doing. I don't know what your situation is, I'm certainly not accusing you of child abuse. What we do need to do is for you and me to sit

down and talk about what might be going on that would give somebody the impression that you and Linda are having problems and you know if there's nothing to it, if everything's okay, then that'll be the end of it. If there is something going on, if you're under some kind of strain or need some help then maybe we can provide some help for you. How does that sound to you?

Parent: Well I don't like it.

CPI: It doesn't sound very pleasant does it?

Parent: No it doesn't, not at all.

CPI: You know I think people have a really hard time talking about how they raise their children, I know I do. It's kind of a sensitive subject. I think I would particularly have a hard time talking about it if I were talking to somebody that I knew had a reason to believe that maybe I was doing something wrong or...

Parent: Well, how long do you think all of this might take?

CPI: Well, it depends. What we would need to do is to sit down and talk about it.