

# Making the Case for the Child Tax Credit Using Motivational Interviewing (MI) Techniques



**What is Motivational Interviewing?** MI is a set of communication skills that foster collaboration and motivate change. The techniques below will provide you with some insight on how to be engaging, collaborative, respectful, and evocative. Below is “PACE”, which is the spirit of MI.

**Partnership:** Remember to be collaborative instead of adversarial

**Acceptance:** Demonstrate unconditional caring; be empathic (understand vs. agree); affirm the good in them

**Compassion:** Show respectful understanding of their thoughts, feelings, values, and circumstances

**Evocation:** Draw out their ideas; people are more persuaded by the ideas you draw from them than ones offered directly.

## Motivational Interviewing technique examples using the [Child Tax Credit](#)

Core Skills: OARS	Open-Ended, Affirmations, Reflections, and Summaries
<p><b>Open questions: focus and deepen movement toward change with the open-ended questions</b></p>	<p><i>What types of policy issues relating to poverty in the districts are you passionate about?</i></p> <p><i>Who does the Representative/Senator look to for more information about the Child Tax Credit?</i></p> <p><i>What can the Representative/Senator do to help lift people out of poverty? What specific legislation have they been following that would aide in that effort?</i></p> <p><i>How can we help the Representative/Senator to support X?</i></p> <p><i>What do you find positive about the Child Tax Credit?</i></p>
<p><b>Affirmations: spotlight their skills, abilities, successes, and reasons for hope.</b></p>	<p><i>“I, and our constituents, really appreciate the actions you’ve taken on the X. We appreciate that...”</i></p>
<p><b>Reflections: reflect both their thoughts and feelings, both stated and implied.</b></p>	<p><i>“When you said X, it reminded me of the value and importance of...”</i></p>
<p><b>Summaries: Review what’s been said, capturing where we are going and why.</b></p>	<p><i>“So, to summarize, I understand that the Representative...”</i></p>

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<p><b>Techniques to help with Resistance</b></p>	<p><i>Below are some examples of how to deal with resistance from members of Congress when discussing the Child Tax Credit.</i></p>
<p><b>Colombo Method:</b> Express your confusion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reflect their view and the discrepant facts as you know them</li> <li>2. Ask for their help resolving the confusion</li> </ol>	<p><i>From my understanding of today's meeting, the Representative/Senator supports the Child Tax Credit but prefers for it to include a work requirement, correct??</i></p> <p><i>Given your consistent support for working families, I thought you'd be interested to know that there are millions of families who work full-time but do not receive the full Child Tax Credit, do you think that should change so that all working families receive the CTC?</i></p> <p><i>I've been glad to hear your consistent support for policies that help working families. Did you know that millions of working families who could benefit from CTC expansion do not simply because they work low-wage jobs? Is that something you'd like to see change?</i></p> <p><i>I also think it is important for parents to support their children financially. But did you know that even by that study's own estimates, the expanded CTC would still reduce child poverty by 22 percent, even after they accounted for any reduction in parental work?</i></p>
<p><b>Reflect:</b> Show interest and understanding of their perspective and values.</p>	<p><i>"I understand the Representative's/Senator's hesitancy around supporting the Child Tax Credit because they value hard work and fiscal responsibility. I respect that, especially because I work hard and must be fiscally responsible in my own life.</i></p> <p><i>That is why I want to see the Child Tax Credit expanded, because it empowers families to make their own choices to find good-paying jobs, pay off bills, and feed their children. This creates greater stability for families, reduces child poverty and hardship, benefits children's educational and health outcomes, and long-term earnings potential. These are all needed for local economies to thrive."</i></p>
<p><b>Ask them to explain their view:</b> This will reveal any knowledge gaps.</p>	<p><i>"Can you explain your position on the Child Tax Credit? Do you know if any of your colleagues are champions on the Child Tax Credit?"</i></p>