

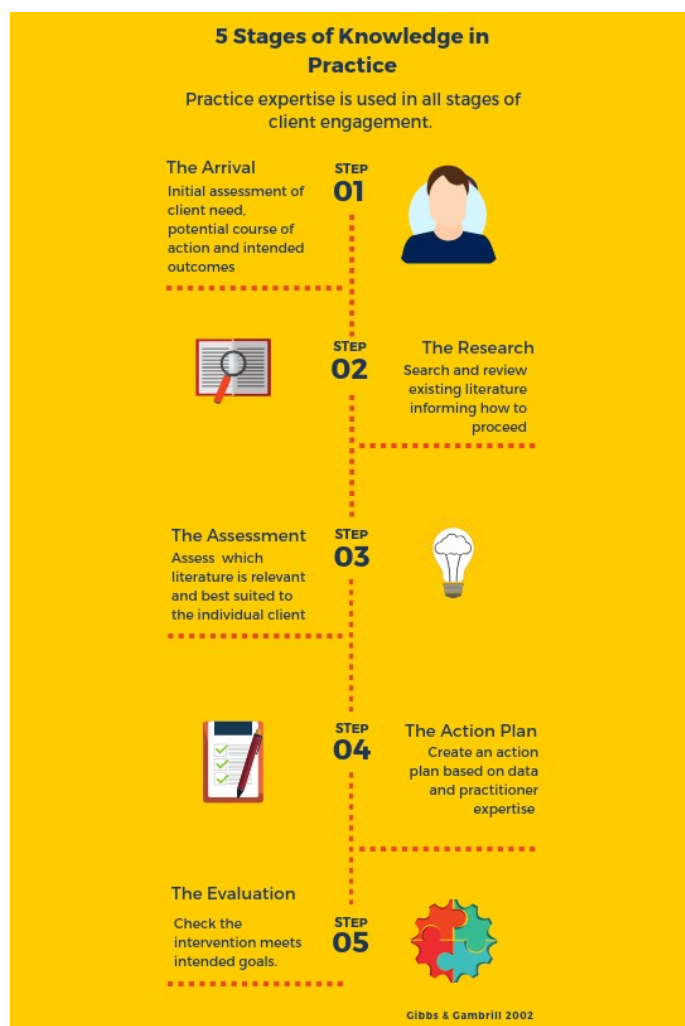
# PRACTICE EXPERTISE

## What is practice expertise?

Practice expertise is our **knowledge** gained from the study and experience of direct engagement with clients in a variety of settings as well as our **understanding of the social world**. It includes our **intuition and personal values** and understanding of what has and hasn't worked in the past. (1)

## When is it used?

Practice expertise is **applied across service design, delivery and evaluation**. It can be drawn on at all stages of a client engagement from the client's arrival to the identification and selection of research evidence (see the diagram below). (2)

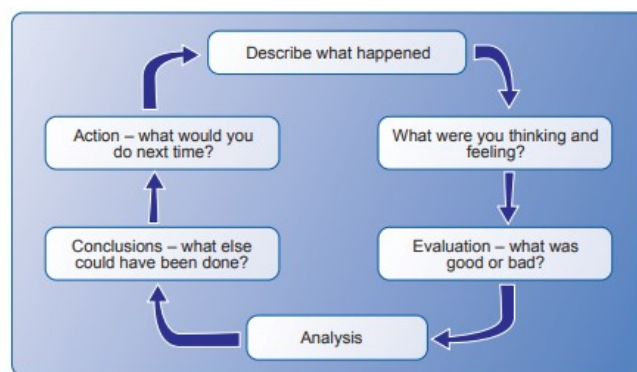


## Values and assumptions in practice

Values and assumptions are a useful part of practice, they can **assist us to plan and care appropriately** for individual clients. Having an awareness of them is important to avoid overshadowing or ignoring the client's own values and beliefs on what change is needed and how this might be achieved. (3)

## Critical reflection for evidence informed practice

Critical reflection is a process to **help us draw knowledge from, and improve practice**. When we engage in critical reflection we can explore and better understand the theories and assumptions that underlie our practice and we can **strengthen and modify** our values, knowledge and behaviour.



Try using the questions in the diagram above to guide your next reflective session with your clinical supervisor and/or colleagues .

To learn more about critical reflection, check out [Podsocs interview with Jan Fook: Podsocs episode #22 - Critical reflection](#)

(1) Cheung, J.C.-S (2016). Researching Practice Wisdom in Social Work. *Journal of Social Intervention: Theory and Practice*, 25(3), pp.24–38

(2) Gibbs, L. & Gambrill, E. (2002). Evidence based practice: counterarguments to objections. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 12(3), 452 - 476.

(3) Moore, T.G. (2016). Towards a model of evidence-informed decision making and service delivery. CCCH Working paper No. 5. Parkville, Victoria: Centre for Community Child Health, Murdoch Childrens Research Institute.

(4) Gibbs, T., Brigden, D., & Hellenberg, D. (2005). Encouraging reflective practice. *South African Family Practice*, 47(7), 5-7.

