

Section 25: What details should we pay attention to in household visits?

Firstly, prepare well. We should develop a detailed plan and preliminary understanding of the basic information, family income, and the thoughts and emotions of the household members through discussions and reviewing archival materials. Familiarize yourself with the information collection forms and survey questionnaires, and clearly plan your interview and topics for conversation, so that you have a good grasp of the situation. This ensures that you have enough conversation topics with the residents, facilitates a closer relationship, and encourages them to open up and share their thoughts.

Secondly, choose the appropriate timing. Seize the opportunity to visit households during the agricultural off-season. For farmers and herders, it is best to choose a time after meals. For working individuals, we should select rest days or time after work in the afternoon to ensure sufficient time and avoid triggering any resistance. When visiting elderly households, we should avoid periods of their entertainment and try to visit in the morning. During busy farming seasons, be flexible about the location. We can immerse ourselves in the fields and engage in work while communicating. In summary, try not to disturb the daily lives of the masses.

Thirdly, focus on the art of communication. Heart-to-heart talks require attention to the art of communication. We should strive within the shortest time to create a relaxed atmosphere for conversation. For example, during the initial meeting, address family members according to their ages by your observation, using respectful titles such as big brother, big sister, uncle, or auntie to achieve a closer relationship, help them relax, and ease any sense of strangeness. We should learn to observe the households' environment, manner, and way of talking, and identify topics that they might be interested in. By engaging in simple discussions on these topics, we could quickly gain their cooperation, and gradually transition to the main theme to obtain relevant information, ensuring that the household visit is conducted in a pleasant atmosphere.

Fourthly, communicate frankly. When faced with questions raised by households or problems they report, we should respond enthusiastically and proactively, instead of evading or directly declining. For questions that can be answered on the spot, we should provide timely and thorough responses. For unfamiliar matters, you should seek clarity and provide a prompt reply, or direct the individuals to relevant consulting units or hotlines, guiding them towards solutions. For issues that fall outside the scope of operation, you should clarify the matter to the individuals, and alleviate any doubts or concerns for them.

Fifthly, pay attention to etiquette. For example, regarding the way we knock on doors, if the households have doorbells, we should use them whenever possible. If we have to knock on the door, we should be mindful of the intensity and rhythm to prevent startling the individuals inside and causing them discomfort. Regarding verbal communication, it is important to communicate flexibly, bilingually or in dialect. Especially when communicating with elders, you should use dialects to quickly open up the topics, give them a good impression, and facilitate smooth progress in the work.

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