**These are the first 10 questions YOU MUST ask an individual you are considering hiring to be your clinical supervisor….**

1. **What are your credentials?**If s/he says s/he is licensed, *verify* it.
2. **How long have you been licensed?**Require a minimum of 5 years.
3. **What is your academic background?**Make sure your supervisor graduated from an accredited program. For counselors [in the United States], that accreditation should be CACREP. Does s/he have a Ph.D. or a Master’s Degree? In what area — counseling, psychology, social work, human resources, etc.? Why did s/he choose the program s/he chose?
4. **Do you have formal training in supervision? If so, how much?**Trends in supervision are changing and the professional standard is rapidly shifting to require **formal training** in clinical supervision before you can provide it to mental health professionals. In many states, like Texas, your clinical supervisor MUST have formal training in order for you to count your supervision hours toward your eventual licensure.

**In PA look for and ask for the number of trainings or workshops the person has had specific to the provision of Clinical Supervision. Ask if the potential supervisor has had Supervision of Supervision (SIT).** Ask what books on clinical supervision the individual had read. Many great counselors are under the mistaken belief that effective counseling skills and knowledge of the code of ethics are all that they need in order to be a high quality effective clinical supervisor. Actual research shows this is not the case.

1. **How long have you been providing clinical supervision?**Again, make sure you get your money’s worth. Require a minimum of 5 years experience in **clinical supervision.**
2. **Can you provide references for your clinical supervision?**This is very important. You want to talk to past employers, previous partners, supervisees, and others who can give you information about professional behavior, personality conflicts, problems, concerns, ethical dilemmas, etc.
3. **What can I expect from supervision under you and what therapeutic skills will you teach me?**This should be discussed and spelled out in a written **Contract of Supervision.**
4. **Do you consider your supervision style to be that of a teacher, consultant, counselor, or evaluator?**Your clinical supervisor should **be ALL of these.** You should expect to learn new information, new therapeutic skills, new ways of conceptualizing your clients, and new resources from your supervisor. You should be able to consult with her or him about any clinical concerns. ***Although you will not be counseled about your personal issues, your supervisor will help you become aware of the ways that your personal issues get in the way of your clients’ best interests.*** And, first and foremost, your clinical supervisor ***will evaluate your level of performance at all times.*** S/he will give you feedback about your strengths and ways to strengthen your performance as a counselor.
5. **How will you evaluate me and how will you provide that information to me?**You should expect to receive verbal and written feedback at regular intervals throughout your supervision.
6. **How would you like me to provide you with feedback about your style of supervision?**You want a supervisor who is ***eager and open to receiving feedback from you*** about your experience and needs for supervision.

**You are encouraged as well to ask the following questions too!**

1. **What professional associations are you a member of?**
Don’t assume that they are telling you the truth. Make sure that you verify their membership through your state licensing board.
2. **How are you involved in these associations?**Does she hold an office in the organization? Remember to verify that your prospective supervisor is as involved as she represents herself to be.
A supervisor who is actually involved in a professional association (rather than just paying her membership dues), is better able to help develop you as a professional in the field.
3. **Why did you choose to join these organizations?**
Was it about the membership fee? The purpose of the organization? The benefits of membership? This can tell you a lot about what is important to your prospective supervisor.
4. **Do you expect me to be involved in a professional association?**If so, then you will want to know *which* organization and *how involved*.
5. **How will you monitor my client’s welfare?**Your supervisor may monitor you through a one-way mirror, ask you to audio / video record your sessions for review, obtain self-reports from you, contact your clients, etc. Most clinical supervisors use a variety of methods to monitor client welfare.
6. **How do you insure my compliance with ethical, legal, and professional standards?**
This is a critical task for your supervisor and you want to make sure that she has a solid plan for this to take place. In doing so, your client as well as you will be protected.
7. **What do you expect of me as your supervisee?**Yes, your supervisor will have expectations of you and the best way to meet them is to go in informed. A **professional clinical supervisor** will have a written contract that stipulates your supervisor’s expectations (as well as your own). **Don’t accept a supervisor who does not have this in place.**
8. **What conflicts typically arise between you and your supervisee?**Everyone has conflicts. You want a supervisor who is aware of them and comfortable enough to talk about them openly and honestly.
9. **How do you handle conflict when it arises with a supervisee?**You want to know that your supervisor has basic problem solving skills.
10. **How do you address counter transference between me and my client?**
As a new therapist, it is likely that you may not have much experience dealing with this predictable but sticky issue. You’ll want a clinical supervisor who doesn’t flinch, judge or shy away from helping you develop skills to deal with issues of transference and counter transference.

*These questions came largely from the* [***Institute in Counselor Supervision***](http://coe-web.unt.ad.unt.edu/counseling-and-higher-education/resources/annual-institute-counselor-supervision) *taught at the* [***University of North Texas’ Counseling Program***](http://www.coe.unt.edu/counseling-and-higher-education/graduate-programs/counseling) *by Carolyn W. Kern, Ph.D., LPC, NCC and Cynthia K. Chandler, Ed.D., LPC, LMFT.*