

## How to Find the Hypnotherapist Right for You – Part 2: Rank Ordering Top Tier Hypnotherapists

In “How to Find the Hypnotherapist Right for You – Part 1: Identifying Hypnotherapists,” you learned how to set qualifications based on your requirements and preferences, find referrals and other prospects, and organize critical data about them in a table. This article provides tips on deciding which hypnotherapists to contact, what questions to ask them, and how to rank order them by qualifications.

To learn how to narrow down to two interviewees, how to interview and evaluate each one, and then how to pick the right one for you, see “How to Find the Hypnotherapist Right for You – Part 3: Making Your Final Selection.”

### How to pre-qualify hypnotherapists

In order to select the hypnotherapist best suited for you, you will first need to rank the prospective candidates on your list from strongest to weakest in order to determine the top three. From those three you will pick two to interview, one of whom will be your final choice. But at this stage, you likely lack critical data necessary for ranking. If you have identified five or more candidates, contacting them for the missing data could be very time-consuming. To avoid this, you pre-qualify prospects to determine your top tier candidates using the following procedure:

1. Identify all hypnotherapists who specialize in your primary problem area.
2. Move that group to the top of the table, placing the rows of the referrals ahead of the non-referrals. These are the top tier candidates.
3. Identify any referrals whose specialization is undetermined. Place them immediately below the others in the second tier.

### What to say when contacting hypnotherapists

You will start by contacting any second tier candidates to determine whether they do in fact specialize in your primary problem area. If they do, place them in the top tier with the other referrals. Be sure to determine any requirements or preferences that may be undetermined for them.

Next you will contact the other top tier referrals to determine any undetermined requirements or preferences. Then do the same for the top tier non-referrals.

Use the phone to make contact. (Emailing is less desirable, but may be necessary if you start playing phone tag.) Phoning gives the added benefit of hearing their voice, not just their words. In addition, if you reach them immediately, you can get a sense of how well they communicate on their feet.

If you don't reach a hypnotherapist, listen to their voice mail message. Does it sound professional, respectful, warm, and intelligent? If not, that's some indication you may not want to work with them. Note any negative or positive initial impressions in their “Comments” cell of the table.

Whether you hear a voice mail message or a live voice, proceed as follows:

Introduce yourself, (indicating who referred them to you, if someone did), and say that you are looking for a certified clinical hypnotherapist who can help you resolve some problems. (Be sure to specify “certified” since the hypnotherapy profession requires certification to practice, and also “clinical” because you are looking for therapy, not stage hypnosis.)

Summarize your problems in a sentence or two. For example, “I am a single mother of two who lost my computer programming job due to down-sizing eight months ago. I am suffering from anxiety, sleep loss, and worry over finances. Do you specialize in treating these problems?”

Having decided which are your three most important requirements (apart from the offer of a consultation for free or fee), find out how many of them each candidate satisfies. For example, find out if they offer week-end or night appointments if you can't schedule during week-days or whether they accept credit cards if you can't pay cash or use insurance, etc. Ask questions about your other requirements and preferences if there is time.

Assuming they satisfy most requirements, mention that you are new to hypnotherapy and have questions about the process as it applies to your issues. Inquire whether they offer a complimentary consultation, either in person or over the phone, and how long it lasts. (If you don't feel comfortable, asking about a free consultation, drop the word "complimentary". They will let you know if it is free.) You may also want to find out if they offer a sliding scale fee structure or discount packages.

If you are speaking to a referred top tier hypnotherapist that wants to set-up a free consultation, schedule it (preferably in-person rather than over the phone) at a mutually convenient time. Be sure to give your contact information in case they need to reschedule, and get their address, including zip code, so you can go online for directions.

If they don't offer a free consultation, ask if they would be willing to answer a few questions now. If so, briefly ask (and take notes on) your two or three most pressing questions. If not, ask what they would charge for a consultation and whether the fee would be applied to the first session.

If they fail to satisfy at least two of your three most important requirements and their consultation fee and terms don't suit you, thank them for their time and eliminate them from the table. You could tell them you have just started identifying prospective therapists and will get back to them if you want to book a paid consultation. Defer scheduling any paid consultations until you determine whether you have enough high ranking hypnotherapists offering consultations for free.

When you leave a voice mail message with your introduction and questions, provide your phone number and your email address as an option in case you are unavailable when they call back. This could yield additional impressions about their responsiveness, listening/writing skills, cooperativeness, follow through, etc. If the information you get back qualifies them as top tier, and affirms the complimentary consultation, schedule it.

Take notes on all conversations, voice mail, and call back messages. If phone tag results in email correspondence, save the email. As you get data, enter it into the table. Any initial impressions, whether favorable or unfavorable should be noted in the "Comments" column. Be sure to indicate which ones offer a complimentary consultation (or a paid consultation that goes toward a first session.)

Remove from the top tier any hypnotherapist who turns out not to specialize in your problem area. Also remove from the top tier any hypnotherapist who neither offers a consultation (whether free or for a reasonable fee that would go towards a first session) nor is willing to answer a few questions while you have them on the phone or in an email.

### **How to rank order the top tier**

After allowing a few days for call backs and email from hypnotherapists you didn't reach directly by phone, enter any additional data you've uncovered into the table. You are now ready to rank order the top tier and identify the top three candidates. Make sure the rows of referrals are placed above those of non-referrals.

Check the "Comments" column looking for any top tier candidate whose initial impression was unfavorable. Remove their row from the table. Trust your gut feelings. They come from your subconscious mind and serve as a red flag that this hypnotherapist is not suited for you.

Begin the narrowing down process by comparing hypnotherapists within each group to determine how well each one satisfies your three most important requirements (excluding the offer for a consultation) as follows:

1. Rank your top tier referrals by the three most important requirements satisfied. Place their rows in descending order (from the greatest number satisfied down to the fewest.)

According to this rule, for example, the row of any top tier referral that satisfies all three of your most important requirements would appear at the top of the table. (If there is a tie, whoever satisfies more of your other requirements would place above the other. If there is still a tie, then consider who satisfies more preferences.)

If none satisfy all three of the most important requirements, any referral who satisfies two of the three would occupy the top row (with the same rules for ties applying), and so forth.

2. Rank your top tier non-referrals by the three most important requirements satisfied. Place their rows in descending order below the referrals.

According to this rule, the same type of rank ordering consequences apply for the non-referrals as apply above for the referrals.

After applying the procedure, the top three candidates occupy the first three rows of your table. Ideally, they are referrals that specialize in your problem area and satisfy all three of your most important requirements (as well as many of your other requirements and preferences). If not, you may need to consider a referral who requires a fee for a consultation, or a non-referral who gives a free one, provided they satisfy your three most important requirements.

If the top three still satisfy too few of your requirements and preferences, you will need to do more research to find hypnotherapists who do.

To learn how to narrow down to two interviewees, how to interview and evaluate them, and how to pick the right one for you, see “How to Find the Hypnotherapist Right for You – Part 3: Making Your Final Selection.”