

From the desks of Bonnie Desselle, MD and Rachel Dawkins, MD....

The following article is the first of many "Faculty Development" sections which will be featured in each month's newsletter.

Too little time to teach? Try the One Minute Preceptor!

The One Minute Preceptor is a five step technique which can be used in a variety of clinical settings. This technique encourages critical thinking by the learner and can help the teacher assess where the learner is in the clinical reasoning process. It also reminds preceptors to provide feedback.

Try this technique after a patient presentation.

Step One: Get a Commitment!

- A question such as "What do you think is happening here?" or "What would be your treatment plan?" helps the learner commit to a diagnosis or treatment option, rather than simply going along with the preceptor's plans.
- Avoid prompting or suggesting a diagnosis or treatment plan at this point

Step Two: Probe for supporting evidence

- What was the learner's thought process? Was this a lucky guess?
- Probing questions such as "Were there any other alternatives you considered?" or "What made you rule out _____?" are helpful.
- This is a great time to ask WHY questions too: "Why would you chose that medication?" "Why would you like that lab test?"

Step Three: Reinforce what was done right

- Comments should include specific behaviors that demonstrated knowledge skills or attitudes valued by the preceptor
- Example: "You did a good job of _____, and this is important because _____"

Step Four: Correct Mistakes

- As it is important for the learner to know what they have done well, it is just as important to learn what needs improvement.
- Again comments should be as specific as possible and try to give guidance on alternative actions or behaviors the learners could use in the future.
- Describe what was wrong, and identify how to avoid and correct the error. Example: "In your patient presentation, you forgot to tell me about the physical exam until after your assessment. In the future, organizing your presentation differently will be helpful" or "Your choice to order X lab test is not correct in this instance, instead we should order Y tests for this type of patient."

Step Five: Teach general rules

- Find a practical teaching point (or two) that can be applied to other clinical situations
- Examples: "When this happens, do this..." or "The key features of this illness are..."

This entire process should take no more than ten minutes including the patient presentation. You may choose to rearrange some of these steps. The One Minute Preceptor will hopefully help you maximize your time available for teaching both medical students and residents.

Want to learn more? Check out: Neher JO, et al. A five-step microskills model of clinical teaching. J Am Board Fam Prac. 1992;5:419-24