

TOP TEN TIPS...

for Clinical Teaching

1. OUTLINE YOUR EXPECTATIONS

Take time to meet with the student before the first day of their clinical rotation to discuss the goals of the practicum, as well as your approach to patient care, teaching style and expectations.

2. DETERMINE STUDENT LEARNING LEVEL

Assess the student's learning level (advanced beginner, transitional, competent/proficient) and adjust your expectations accordingly. The objectives in the course syllabus can help you determine the student's learning level.

3. FEEDBACK

Schedule regular feedback sessions, which are where a great deal of learning occurs.

4. TEACHING DELIVERY

Inform the student of your teaching methods. Let the student know that you will engage in questioning to direct the teaching. Listen carefully and watch for cues of when to provide hints or when to 'normalize' the questioning (e.g., "I know, this is challenging material.")

5. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Don't give away the answer by shaking your head "yes" or "no" when asking questions. Use nonverbal cues to encourage the student and to create a supportive learning environment.

6. GET THE STUDENT TO THINK OUT LOUD

It is not what you're thinking; it is what they're thinking! The goal is to encourage the student to share their clinical reasoning so that you can assess, correct and acknowledge their critical thinking.

7. BEDSIDE MANNER

Simultaneous activities can occur at the bedside: confirm correct clinical information, observe student skills and behaviors and provide useful information to the patient. Patients prefer hearing a presentation and discussion about themselves and their current status.

8. BE A MODEL

Show how to be a good clinician. Demonstrate good communication skills, professionalism and empathy.

9. NO ONE KNOWS EVERYTHING

If you don't know the answer to a question or situation, say so. Then demonstrate how you go about finding the answer. Show the student that it is okay not to know everything, but that it is never okay to pretend you know the answer when you do not.

10. OBSERVATION

Make it a priority to observe the student interacting with patients, staff and other clinicians. Such observations can be a rich source of feedback on clinical skills, communication and professionalism.