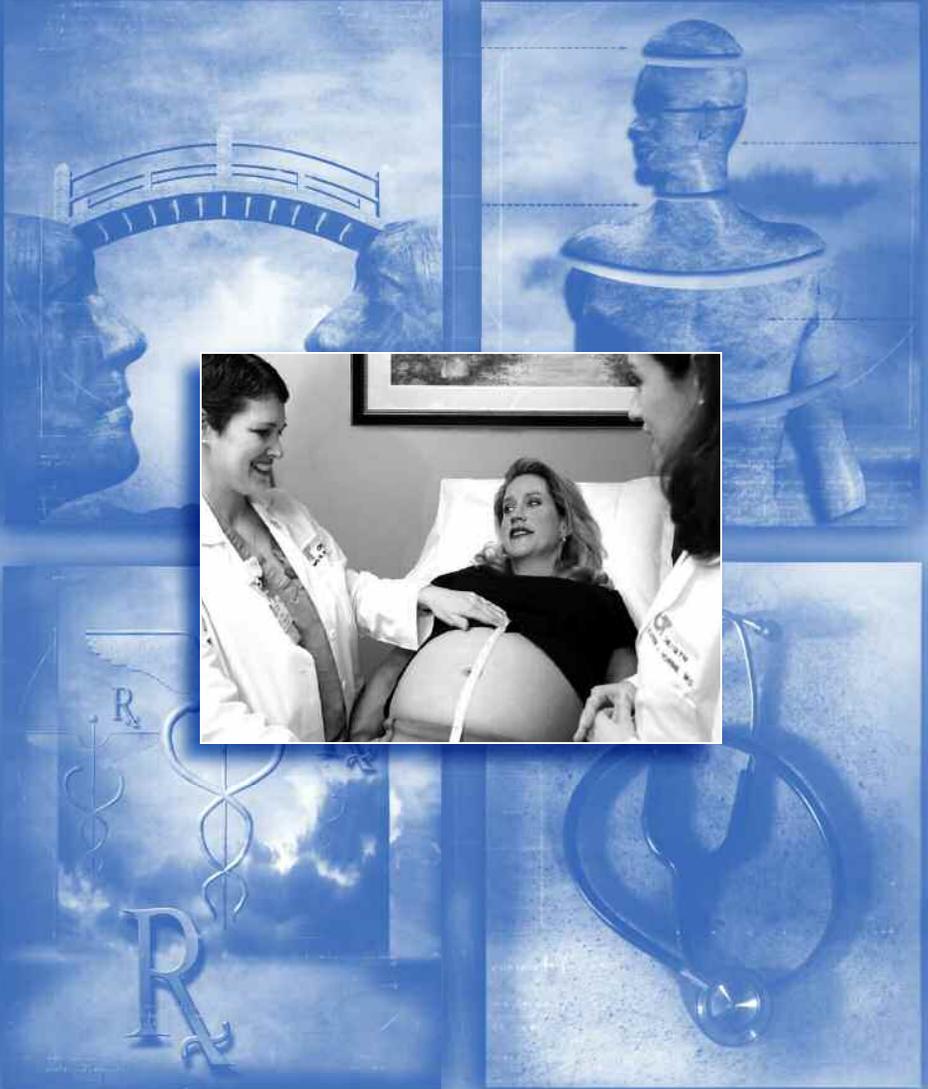


THE EFFECTIVE PRECEPTOR SERIES

The Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO)

Providing Educational Feedback



Providing Educational Feedback

What is feedback?

Feedback is a constructive and objective appraisal of performance. It is given to improve a student's behavior or skills. It can be formative in nature for the purpose of modifying the learner's behavior or it may be a summative evaluation, in which a judgment is made about performance (grades) and for comparison among learners.

Why is feedback important?

Medical students and residents learn through direct clinical encounters under faculty supervision. Effective feedback helps the learner modify and improve behavior and performance to meet clerkship or residency objectives and requirements.

Can feedback really make a difference?

Effective feedback is an important step in the acquisition of clinical skills and a key component in adult learning. It can motivate students to study and ask questions in areas where their knowledge may be deficient.

Poor quality feedback can make students feel as if they have been personally judged, or that their thoughts, opinions and ideas are being ignored or slighted. This can lead to defensiveness or reactivity.

What do learners want from the experience?

Medical students and residents greatly value feedback and identify it as one of the most important qualities of a good preceptor, second only to clinical competence. Adult learners want feedback to be specific, based on performance, and to be tailored to their goals.

What preparation is needed?

Both participants should be prepared and ready to ensure a maximally productive session. They should have agreed on the timing, place and purpose of the meeting, and understand the formative nature of the process. The learner should self-assess and the preceptor should prepare specific observations on which to base the feedback.

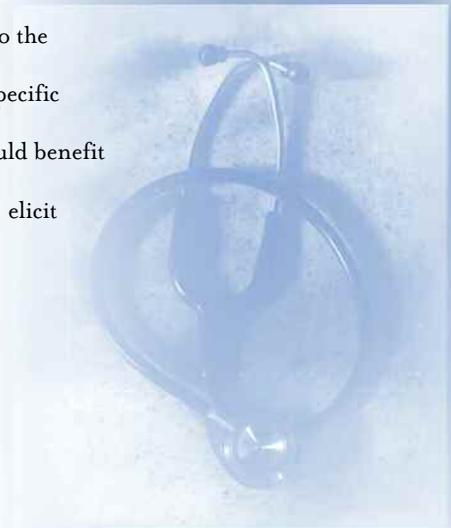
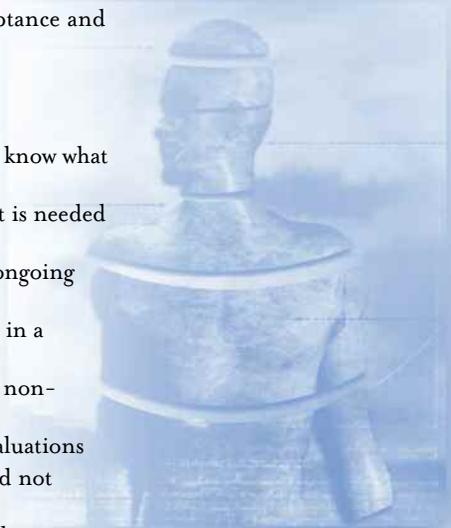
What are some fundamentals of a good feedback encounter?

- Both participants are prepared, oriented to the process and ready
- Time the encounter close to observed event to increase impact on learning
- Create a positive environment, so student will welcome constructive feedback
- Encourage the learner to self-assess; facilitate problem-solving

- Relate feedback to clear objectives and goals; emphasize correct performance
- Discuss specific examples; center on observed behaviors or decisions
- Focus on items that can be changed, not abilities and traits; avoid embarrassment
- Develop an action plan; assure student acceptance and understanding

Principles of Basic Feedback

- Develop clear course objectives; student must know what to expect; share common goals
- Establish a relationship with the learner; trust is needed for learner acceptance
- Plan feedback in advance; a predetermined, ongoing schedule is best
- Arrange for the feedback session to take place in a private setting
- Base feedback on descriptive observations; be non-judgmental and performance-specific
- Use first-hand observation and/or written evaluations
- Focus on areas the student can control; should not pertain to personal characteristics
- Set realistic expectations and, remember, students require different levels of support
- Feedback should be given in close proximity to the observation you discuss; be timely
- Deliver focused and concise feedback; limit specific observations to prevent overload
- Balance positive and negative comments; should benefit the learner
- Give the learner a chance for self-assessment; elicit reaction and understanding
- Arrange follow-up; plan of action
- Use positive end comments
- Document the encounter



Providing Educational Feedback

A literature review indicates that educational feedback should:

Feedback Basics

- Be descriptive and specific to an event
- Be based on direct observation
- Occur in a timely fashion
- Convey constructive information to improve performance and learning
- Relate to clerkship goals and objectives
- Focus on behavior and performance that can be changed
- Encourage the learner to self-assess
- Be limited in quantity
- Be regular and an identifiable part of the clinical experience
- Summarize positives and areas for future growth
- Establish follow-up and action plan
- Include documentation of the encounter
- Assure learner understanding and acceptance – key to improvement

Preparation

- Establish a relationship that emphasizes working together
- Create an environment of trust
- Stress common goals
- Develop clear course/clerkship goals
- Ensure privacy and address the setting
- Allow time for change by being conducted early
- Inform students to expect it as part of the clerkship experience
- Train learners how to elicit educational feedback

Content

- Apply the Feedback Sandwich
- Develop an action and follow-up plan
- Remember to end on a positive note
- Set realistic expectations
- Ascertain student acceptance and understanding
- Implement a learner-centered approach
 - Have student state self-assessment
 - Encourage active participation by learner
 - Assess the student's willingness to change
 - Involve student in improvement plan

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General Guidelines for Basic Feedback

The Feedback Sandwich

Present Positive Observations

Discuss what the student is doing well
Focus on skills, attitudes and behaviors

Identify Areas of Improvement

Give descriptions of deficiencies or inappropriate behaviors
Convey the information objectively and give specific examples

Positive Ending Comments

Present suggestions for improvement
Discuss how improvement might be achieved
Review identified strengths and what student can do differently

Guidelines for the Preceptor – Giving Feedback

- Base on first-hand observations and consistent standards
- Focus on specific performances, not generalizations
- Schedule timely encounters so both are prepared
- Regulate quantity to avoid overload
- Phrase using descriptive, non-evaluative language
- Ensure learner acceptance and understanding
- Concentrate on active participation to increase learning
- Discuss action plan to maximize behavior change

Guidelines for the Learner – Eliciting and Responding to Feedback

- Expect feedback to enhance learning
- Communicate needs and goals
- Be accepting to suggestions
- Perceive feedback as a learning tool
- Avoid defensive responses; ask for clarification
- Practice problem-solving
- See mistakes as an opportunity to improve
- Learn to elicit feedback to enhance learning





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The Effective Preceptor Series is a project of the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) Undergraduate Medical Education Committee (UMEC):

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The Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO) promotes excellence in women's health care by providing optimal resources and support to educators who inspire, instruct, develop and empower women's health care providers of tomorrow.

This publication is part of the APGO Effective Preceptor Series – a group of pamphlets intended to educate practitioners and learners about the apprentice system or preceptorship. The quality of learning that occurs in an established relationship between the teacher and the student often meets the challenge of educating physicians in today's chaotic health care environment. It allows doctors in training to practice as much like doctors as good medical practice will allow...and it provides a setting in which some of the best medical education in our nation takes place.

To learn more about APGO and The Preceptorship Series publications, contact:

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