Orienting Learners

Learning objective: At the end of this session, participating residents will be able to orient a medical student or intern to a new rotation.

The “ORIENT” Approach to Orienting a Learner to a New Rotation

Orientation
- Clarify mutual goals for this orientation session: what are the learner’s expectations today?
- Discuss mutual goals and expectations for the rotation.
- Start with the learner: What does s/he hope to get out of this rotation? Explore learner’s concerns and interests in detail.
- What are his/her learning goals?

Responsibilities
- Explain learner’s role in patient care and other teamwork:
  - Format for supervision and teaching;
• Expectations regarding charting;
• Where and when learner will receive feedback;
• Call arrangements;
• Anything else s/he should know about your particular institution.

**Interchange**

• How can the learner best balance service vs. learning goals during the rotation?

**Education**

• Model *self-directed learning*: ask learner to define his or her own learning goals and how s/he can best achieve them.
• Offer suggestions for reading and learning during the rotation (books, articles, online resources, consultants).

**Needs**

• What questions does the learner have?
• Is there anything else going on that you might help with (e.g., any special needs or concerns)?
**Timing of follow-up session**
- Any final questions or comments?
- When would learner prefer to meet again to follow up on mutual goals for the rotation?

**Introduction to Learning Theory**

**Concept:**
Adult learners (and probably any other learners) learn best through interactive, learner-centered teaching focused on their self-defined learning goals.

**1970s: Behavioral Learning Theories**
- Learning defined as a change in observable behavior
- Behavioral learning objectives
- Student ratings of teachers became more popular.
1980s: Cognitive Learning Theories
• Learning defined as the active construction of meaning
• Teaching strategies focus on helping learners “encode” new knowledge within existing conceptual frameworks.

1990s: Social Learning Theories
• Learning defined as socialization into a new community of knowledge
• Teachers seek to promote a “learning culture” among students.
• Role modeling becomes particularly important in professional training.

21st Century: New Learning Theories?
Resident teachers and medical faculty can combine and expand learning theories from past decades
to create new approaches to teaching and learning.

Reference: