The difficult teaching situation: what do I do now?

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Objectives

1. Learn how to recognize the difficult learner.
2. Identify common causes for disruption to YOUR educational process. What about THE LEARNER’S educational process?
3. Develop techniques for engaging a difficult
Importance
Dr. Smith is an intern halfway through her first year. Board scores and grades are higher than average. She dresses appropriately, but is tardy almost daily and often ignores Chief residents and attendings on rounds. Her classmates have started complaining that they must “pick up the slack” when she is late or absent.
What is the first question to ask yourself?

• Cognitive?
• NonCognitive?
• System?
Mapping Competencies to Challenges

- Patient Care
- Medical Knowledge
- Practice Based Learning and Improvement
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- Professionalism
- System Based Practice
What to look for

- Lack of participation
- Absence
- Disruptive funny guy
- Gunner
“Remember, the learner is not the problem; the problem is the unprofessional actions or unacceptable behaviors”
Source of Difficulty

Student

Interpersonal/Non-cognitive

Cognitive/Knowledge Base

System/Administrative

Definition of team roles

Mandatory vs. Elective

Evaluation/Feedback

Educator/Physician

Departmental support

Formal training

Staffing

Resident Involvement
Case # 2

• Dr. Brown is a surgical specialty resident with a PhD in anatomy. He is family friends with the Program Director. On numerous occasions, he has had “run ins” with nursing, changed attending physician orders, and often his duties on night float are completed by his fellow residents.

• How do you approach his entitlement?
How do I document the difficult learner experience?
SOAP Method

• **Subjective**
  o Educator describes the chief complaint

• **Objective**
  o Specific examples of chief complaint

• **Assessment**
  o Differential dx

• **Plan**
  o Must involve the learner
  o Specific expectations

Ronan-Bentle et al 2011
Next step...Giving feedback and formulating a plan.
TIPS

• Type
  o Give specific examples of ineffective behavior

• Identify
  o What is the category of difficulty?
  o Cognitive vs noncognitive

• Perception
  o Educator must express thoughts about learner’s difficulty
  o Must allow learner to communicate his thoughts on the difficulty

• Strategies
  o Be specific
  o Always follow up
  o Can apply to immediate rotation or entire education

• Ronan-Bentle et al 2011
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What did we learn?

- We are here for the Patient...do no harm!!!
- Cognitive vs Noncognitive
- System or Educator problems present?
- Intervene early and be specific
- Document with SOAP
- “TIPS” are feedback
- And....