

PRECEPTOR TRAINING

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What is a preceptor?

- You are an expert, such as a Registered Dietitian, who provides guidance, practical experience and training to an intern.
- You must have adequate time to provide supervision.
- You are a planner, role model, provider of information, facilitator of learning, and a guide.
- You will be all these things and more to a dietetic intern

Thank you!

Characteristics of a Great Preceptor:

- Demonstrates enthusiasm and patience; shows respect for people of all backgrounds.
- Remembers interns are preparing for *entry-level* work; participates in own professional enhancement regularly.
- Is honest, self-confident & willing to demonstrate skills for the intern.

A Great Preceptor (cont.):

- Challenges intern performance by giving them responsibility.
- Is specific with praise and appropriate feedback.
- Honors the interns' efforts.

Limitations and Strengths of Interns:

- They are intelligent with a lot of book knowledge; they have different modes of learning – visual, auditory, practical.
- They have an untested work ethic; they may not know how to prioritize work or manage time; they may be unsure of their abilities.
- They may not understand the limitations imposed by reality; they are idealistic.

Limitations and Strengths of interns (Cont.):

- They may have limited client/patient contact; limited management and foodservice experience; limited team experiences, therefore limited skills; limited communication skills.
- Please do not assume a MS or PhD intern has more advanced clinical or administrative skills.

Strategies to be Successful with an intern

Create a learning environment:

- Where Interns can make a mistake without fear of reprisal.
- Where Interns are expected to solve problems and receive feedback for their efforts.
- Where you as the Preceptor know the difference between "*need to know*" vs. "*nice to know*" in order for the intern *to truly be at entry-level*.

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Clear Communication:

- Provide orientation
- Ground rules
- Explain the norms for work
- Learn who you are working with
- Model professional characteristics
- Be focused and enthusiastic

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Evaluation:

- Should be *ongoing during the process* of rotation experience and *frequent* to help modify skills and behaviors.
- Should be *at the end* of the rotation experience to determine what expectations have been met and what skills and behaviors need to be strengthened in future activities.

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Handling difficult situations; CAUSES:

- Inadequate knowledge prior to the rotation.
- Skill deficiencies (unable to translate theories to treatment).
- Personality difficulties (poor communication and interpersonal relationships).
- Situational difficulties (ex: intern's parent died of cancer, intern avoids working w/cancer patients).

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Handling difficult situations; STRATEGIES:

- First, remember that rotations can be adapted as long as the intern learns the desired competency.
- Be realistic about expectations of intern.
- Identify problems early in order to promptly address them.
- Interns need to understand that there are consequences of their actions.

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Handling difficult situations; STRATEGIES:

- Frequent, ongoing evaluation provides the forum for discussion of problems as well as positive feedback.
- In a discussion, be specific, professional and to the point.
- Clearly state policies and expectations.
- Try to identify the positive in an intern in order to provide a foundation on which to build improvement.
- Talk with the intern about situations that make them apprehensive.

Additional Strategies (cont.)

Handling difficult situations; STRATEGIES:

- Provide sources of additional information outside of the rotation.

Please remember: Without you as a preceptor there would not be dietetic internship programs. You have an enormous impact on the education of aspiring practitioners. Your efforts ARE TRULY APPRECIATED!!!

What Do They Need to Learn?

The CORE COMPETENCIES:

- The Competencies were translated into “Required Assignments and Experiences”
- They are to guide the intern and preceptor in the learning experience
- The Competencies form the backbone of the Rotation Evaluations and Progress Reports
- The assignments that correspond to the CRDs will further learning for an intern.

Last But Not Least

Use the Program Coordinator as a resource for yourself.

- I will do my best to clarify the internship process.
- I am here to support your efforts and advocate for both you and the intern.
- My goal is success for *everyone* involved in the program. Your efforts should pay off for you too.