EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK
A Vital Component in Radiation Therapy Student Clinical Education®
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Objectives
• Define feedback
• Recognize importance of feedback
• Identify barriers to feedback
• Discuss characteristics of effective feedback

Outline
• Introduction
• Feedback versus Evaluation
• Background
• Providing Feedback: when, where, how
• Barriers to Effective Feedback
• Summary

Relevance of this topic

Your Role in clinical education
• You ...
  – are “real life” role models
  – have greater credibility than the program faculty
  – care about patients and the future – your legacy

What radiation therapy students want from you?
- Clear expectations
- Understanding their progress
- Regular/realistic feedback about weaknesses and strengths
- Being accepted as a (student) team member
- A clinical mentor
- Excluded from personnel disputes

Competency

Becoming Competent

Deliberate practice
- Working on well defined tasks
- Informative feedback
- Repetition
- Self-reflection
- Motivation
- Endurance

What is feedback?

Definition

“Specific information about the comparison between observed performance and a standard, given with the intent to improve performance.”
Feedback vs. Evaluation

**Formative**
- Focuses on Current performance
- Presents Information

**Summative**
- Focuses on Past performance
- Presents Judgment

FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEGE

**Step # 1**

Competent Graduate Therapist

Clinical instructor

Faculty provide & assess professional knowledge

Student Therapist

**Feedback helps to**
- Reinforce good performance
- Identify unacceptable performance immediately
- Increase awareness and understanding
- Correct mistakes before they can be repeated

**When there is no feedback**
- No performance improvement
- Bad habits reinforced
- Student ultimately fails
  - or, worse
- Student graduates and is a danger to patients!

**Some excuses to not provide student feedback**
- “too busy”
- “that’s program’s job”
- “don’t know how”
- “let next clinic do this”
- “they’ll get better with time”
- “don’t want to be disliked”
- “opinion doesn’t count”
Challenges

• Heavy patient load
• Little time
• Multiple instructors
• Few quiet places to talk
• Rapidly changing technology

Isn't self reflection enough?

Metacognitive Skill

• “the ability to monitor one’s own learning, perform self-evaluation, and then make plans accordingly”


Pitfalls of Self Evaluation/Assessment

Self Perception of Ability

“There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know one’s self.”

Benjamin Franklin

The “Dunning-Kruger” Effect

• not always accurate judges of our own knowledge
• often overestimate how much we know

Dunning, 2011; Kruger & Dunning, 1999
"A student who knows not, they know not"

Overconfidence
• Judge accuracy of our actions too favorably
• overestimate how well we perform everyday tasks relative to other people
  Alicke & Davey, 2001; Dunham, Heath, & Suls, 2004

"Over-claiming"
• claiming knowledge we cannot possibly have, because the object of our knowledge does not exist
  Bishop, Oldendick, Tuchfarber, & Bennet, 1980; Paulhus, Harms, Bruce, & Lysy, 2003

Advantages to Self Assessment
• Provides student’s view of performance.
• Helps to lead discussion.
• Demonstrates that instructor cares about student’s views
• Helps in creation of positive environment

Explicit Communication
• Spoken or written

Implicit Communication
• Non-verbal

Setting the Stage
• Establish professional relationship.
• Ask what their goals are for rotation
• Tell student about yourself.
• Learn about them.
**Feedback**

- instructor and student working as allies, with common goals
- well-timed and expected
- limited in quantity and to remediable behaviors
- descriptive, non-evaluative language
- based on first-hand data

**Feedback should ...**

- deal with specific performances, not generalizations
- objective, not subjective or judgmental
- deal with decisions and actions, rather than assumed intentions or interpretations

**Good Feedback**

- Expectations
- Timeliness
- Specificity
- Clarity
- Collegiality

**Expectations**

- Established performance measures
- Student knows what is expected of them upfront

**Timeliness**

- Close to event
- Frequent
- Safe/private setting

**Specificity**

- Limit to what you observe
- Focus on specific behaviors
- Deal with actions, not assumed intentions or interpretations
Clarity
• Limit to remediable behaviors
• Phase description in non-evaluative language.
• Provide clear understanding of what was wrong and what corrective steps to take.

Avoid using “always” or “never”

Collegiality
• Focus on behavior, not person
• Do not put being a “friend” over providing appropriate feedback

Barriers to communication
• Belittling
• Humiliating
• Shaming
• Name calling
• Threatening

Emotions
• Assume a positive outcome
• Stay positive

Emotions
• Start off and stay calm
• Do not go into “attack mode”
Comparisons

“Comparison is the thief of joy.”
– Theodore Roosevelt

Non-verbal communication

You and the student

Non-verbal communication

• Facial Expression
• Gestures
• Eye Contact
• Posture
• Physiological Changes
• Proxemics/Personal Space

Physiological Changes

• Examples
  – Sweating
  – Tremor

Personal Space/Proxemics

Personal Space

• Intimate
  0–18”
  • Partners
  • Core Family
• Personal
  18”–4 ft
  • Friends
  • Extended Family
• Social
  4–10 ft
  • Acquaintances
• Public
  10+ ft
  • Passer-by
  • Colleagues
  • Stranger

“Proxemics” by Natbrock
Alicia Tom - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Proxemics.png#/media/File:Proxemics.png

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Structured Approaches to Deliver Feedback

Tip
Always tell student that you are giving them feedback

Feedback Sandwich version A
Compliment
Criticism
Compliment

Feedback Sandwich version B
Ask
Tell
Ask

Ask
Ask student to assess own performance
Begin the interactive process
Assesses student’s level of insight and stage of learning
Promotes reflective practice

Tell
- Tell what you observed
  - Include both positive & corrective elements
  - “I observed....”
- React to student’s observation
  - Feedback on self-assessment
- Provide suggestions how to improve
Ask (again)

- Ask about student’s understanding and strategies for improvement
- What could you do differently?
  - Give own suggestions
- Commit to monitoring improvement together

Negative responses

- Denial
- Crying
- Blaming
- Anger
- Rationalization

Don’t Rescue!

Remember the goal

To educate highly competent, caring radiation therapists

Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn.

Benjamin Franklin