O. R. PRECEPTOR GUIDELINES

I. Definition of a Preceptor: A Teacher

II. Qualifications of a Preceptor:
A. Must have clinical expertise in his/her field
B. Must like to teach
C. Be flexible/Adept at adjusting priorities
D. Has effective communication skills
E. Is effective in problem solving skills
F. Is familiar with and practices policies and procedures of the department

III. Functions of a Preceptor:
A. Clinical resource/role model;
B. Teaches within the guidelines of the procedures and policies of the department and program
C. Introduces preceptee to facilities, physicians, peers, and other employees
D. Sets the tone for positive experiences by creating a less stressful learning environment
E. Coaches, counsels, and supports
F. Assists the preceptee in setting goals through identifying individual learning needs
G. Assists with the evaluation of the preceptee's performance in the clinical setting

IV. Setting Goals
A. Goals may be self-directed but must be guided towards expected outcomes.
B. Plan what preceptee is to learn:
   1. Organize thoughts into steps—simple to complex
   2. Teach one step at a time
   3. Remember what is basic or simple for the preceptor is not basic or simple for the preceptee
C. Goals must be set within a time frame
D. Goals must be realistic

V. Establishing the relationship:
A. Establish a line of communication
   1. Ascertain:
      a. What preceptee needs to learn
      b. What types of learning experience are needed
      c. How much supervision is needed
   2. Actively Listen
B. Gradually have preceptee develop independence and initiative
C. Encourage preceptee to assume responsibility for his/her own learning experience
D. Problem solve together
   1. Put preceptee at ease
   2. Ask open-ended questions
   3. Be honest and consistent
   4. Do not block communication by judging, topping a problem, or giving unasked for reassurance
E. Offer positive feedback when earned
   1. Remember body language
   2. Remember eye contact
   3. Remember tone of voice
   4. If an effort is ignored—attitude will be "Why Bother"
   5. People usually live up to expectations
   6. People will accept negative feedback when positive feedback is consistent
   7. Choose at first, tasks that you know preceptee can handle easily. This will instill confidence to try more difficult tasks
F. Remember that no one is infallible or knows everything admit when you don't know; direct to where you will both find out

VI. Teaching
A. Adults learn by doing with supervision
B. Encourage independence by guiding—find out if the preceptee is ready
   1. Guiding vs. Pushing
   2. Encouraging vs. Nagging
C. Recognize that people learn at different paces
D. Don't expect organization and judgment in the beginning. Judgment develops slowly but speeds up after skills are learned
E. Reinforce what is taught in the program. Skills are learned one step at a time; for beginner's conflicting input confuses, frustrates and produces anxiety. Anxiety and fear inhibit learning