



Operating Room Preceptor Guidelines

I. Definition of a Preceptor: A Clinical Teacher

II. Qualifications of a Preceptor:

- A. Must hold relevant certification credential
- B. Minimum of three years experience as a certified surgical technologist within the last 5 years
- C. Must possess knowledge of the surgical technology core curriculum
- D. Must possess knowledge of surgical technology program learning and evaluation process
- E. Be flexible/Adapt
- F. Has effective communication skills
- G. Is effective in problem solving skills
- H. Is familiar with and practices policies and procedures of the HCF
- I. Has completed a preceptor training program

III. Functions of a Preceptor:

- A. Clinical resource/role model/mentor;
- B. Teaches within the guidelines of the procedures and policies of the HCF 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 hand-on experience 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