

Dealing with a Difficult Learning Situation

Steps to Address Difficult Situations

Prevention:

- Set expectations
- Orient the student well
- Re-assess halfway through the rotation

Early detection:

- Pay attention to clues and intuition
- Give specific feedback and monitor
- Initiate SOAP

Management:

- Seek help from the clerkship or program director
- Communicate your concerns
- Assess fairly

Behaviors and Plans

Frequency of behavior	Description of behavior	Intervention/Plan
Frequently encountered and difficult to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright with poor interpersonal skills • Excessively shy, non-assertive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address student directly • Contact clerkship director • Role model appropriate behaviors
Frequently encountered and not difficult to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor integration skills • Over-eager • Cannot focus on what is important • Disorganized • Disinterested • A poor fund of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments/reading • Clinical reasoning cases • Provide feedback • Link tasks on your service to learner's area of interest • Monitor performance • Directed reading • Send to academic support
Not frequently encountered and difficult to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot be trusted • A psychiatric problem • A substance abuse problem • "Con artist" (manipulative) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact clerkship director
Not frequently encountered and not difficult to manage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hostile • Rude • Too casual and informal • Avoids work • Does not measure up intellectually • Avoids patient contact • Does not show up • Challenges everything • All thumbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address student directly (learning prescription) • Contact clerkship director • Monitor performance/attendance • Provide feedback • Learner contract