

Ten Good Rules for Medical Education

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How can I be a great teacher for my learners? This is a unique challenge for all of us in an era where our learners are a diverse group that includes patients and families, medical students, residents, colleagues, and complementary providers as well as a multitude of additional team members, all with distinct needs. As the complexity, pace, and systematic pressures of patient care and education have intensified over the years, we have all faced enormous challenges as teachers and learners. By developing our teaching expertise, we can enhance the opportunities for our learners' success. Members of the SGIM Education Committee reviewed educational and medical literature to craft "10 Good Rules" for becoming a great teacher:

1. Create a safe and engaging learning environment that inspires all to grow and improve.
2. Develop and negotiate mutual goals and objectives.
3. Assess learners to identify their strengths, learning gaps, and areas for improvement through data.
4. Probe with advanced questions to determine conceptual understanding, and teach to those gaps in knowledge.
5. Establish and maintain high expectations, and hold self and others accountable.
6. Demonstrate resiliency and adaptability while balancing the needs of the patient with those of the learners to maximize care and education.
7. Engage in and promote lifelong learning through deliberative practice of both clinical and teaching skills.
8. Exemplify professionalism, and reinforce the tenets of high-value, cost-conscious, and team-based care.
9. Provide systematic and ongoing feedback to learners, and elicit feedback for self-improvement.
10. Value and feel personal reward and meaning in your role as teacher.

We believe these 10 rules can help teachers at all levels improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the benefit of our learners and by extension our patients. As educators it is paramount that we challenge our comfort zone and continually work to improve our skills. These rules should be viewed as a guide for both the "novice" and "expert" teacher as we all strive to be great. Only through hard work, assessment, and feedback can we improve.

Suggested Reading

Cruess SR, Cruess RL, Steinert Y. Role modelling—making the most of a powerful teaching strategy. *BMJ* 2008; 336:718-21.

Irby DM, et al. Characteristics of effective clinical teachers of ambulatory care medicine. *Acad Med* 1991; 66(1):54-5.

Wright SM, et al. Attributes of excellent attending-physician role models. *N Engl J Med* 1998; 339:1986-93.