

Teaching Tips for Occupational Therapy (OT) Fieldwork Educators

Student development begins in the classroom and ends with the enrichment of fieldwork experiences where clinicians model best practice concepts to foster optimal learning. The purpose of fieldwork education is to facilitate entry-level practice for OT and OTA students through experiential learning opportunities. This document provides a general outline of teaching strategies for clinicians who have taken on an additional professional role as a fieldwork educator.

A general progression of clinical care skill development for Level II students includes observational skills, supported clinical participation, and transition into self-directed patient care to promote entry-level competency achievement. Further resources that provide comprehensive pedagogy development are located under the "Supplemental Resources" section of TOTA's Fieldwork Education page which features the citations below.

Establish Clear Expectations

- Overview professional behaviors and site expectations
- Utilize supportive documents that provide structure such as weekly student feedback forms

Promote Active Participation

- Build observation skills to promote sound clinical reasoning
- Provide targeted inquiries or prompts alongside patient sessions or scenarios ("why" and "what" questions)
- Demonstrate techniques through modeling (student watches, then performs)
- When applicable, require students to teach the skill to a fellow clinician or peer
- Encourage students to evaluate their work before offering specific feedback
- Intentionally schedule time to share thoughts for reflective debrief and feedback

Build Clinical Reasoning

- Verbalize clinical reasoning skills when creating intervention plans
- Ask students to explain their reasoning processes
- Scaffold session participation when cultivating clinical judgment
- Reinforce the development of task analysis skills
- Promote problem-solving skills and formation of clinical hypotheses to support the therapeutic process

Reinforce Student Learning

- Provide transparent, constructive, and timely feedback regarding student performance
- Provide positive reinforcement and phrases
- When necessary, implement feedback by first acknowledging and building upon student strengths
- Invite students to verbalize their thought processes with a shared dialogue of clinical reasoning
- Ask students about course assignments to link classroom knowledge to practice
- Remember to address skills and competencies that are assessed on the AOTA's Fieldwork Performance Evaluation tool

Embrace a growth mindset

- Mistakes are normal!
- Growth occurs through repetition and reflection

Molly Amlung, OTR

Costa, D. (2007). Feedback in clinical supervision. *Clinical supervision in occupational therapy: A guide for fieldwork and practice* (pp. 121-132). AOTA Press.

Deluliis, E. D. & Hanson, D. (2023). Teaching tips and strategies for fieldwork learning. In E. D. Deluliis & A. Raymond (Eds.), *Fieldwork educator's guide to level II fieldwork* (pp. 227-254). SLACK Incorporated.