

# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION TEACHING

Gregory Makoul, PhD MS

Communication teaching should:

- 1 draw on both communication science and clinical science, and focus attention on understanding what matters to patients as people – not solely what’s the matter with them
- 2 use a coherent framework to define, and help learners achieve, patient-centred communication tasks that provide a sense of purpose for learning communication skills relevant to everyday clinical practice
- 3 preserve the individuality of learners by encouraging them to develop a repertoire of strategies and skills for accomplishing communication tasks in a way that works for them, their patients, and the situation at hand
- 4 recognize, and address the importance of managing, the real world of everyday clinical practice (e.g., time pressures, documentation realities, workflow issues) in all communication teaching and assessment
- 5 include systematic assessment and direct feedback regarding learners’ ability to effectively accomplish basic communication tasks as well as engage in more difficult conversations
- 6 encourage learners to reflect on how effective communication can improve the clinical experience for both patients and providers, and serve as one means of inoculating themselves against burnout

## References:

1. Street RL Jr, Makoul G, Arora NK, Epstein RM. How does communication heal? Pathways linking clinician-patient communication to health outcomes. *Patient Education and Counseling*. 2009;74:295-301.
2. Makoul G. The interplay between education and research about patient-provider communication. *Patient Education and Counseling*. 2003;50:79-84.
3. Makoul G, Schofield T. Communication teaching and assessment in medical education: An international consensus statement. *Patient Education and Counseling*. 1999;37:191-195.
4. Makoul G (Bayer-Fetzer Conference on Physician-Patient Communication in Medical Education). Essential elements of communication in medical encounters: the Kalamazoo consensus statement. *Academic Medicine*. 2001;76:390-393.
5. Erschens R, et al. Professional burnout among medical students: systematic literature review and meta-analysis. *Medical Teacher*. 2018;[Epub ahead of print]:1-12.

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