STARCH Your Feedback

An Evidence Based Addition to Standard Feedback Models

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Introduction/Background

Current Approaches to Giving Learners Feedback

- Feedback (FB) is an essential element in supporting the growth and enthrustment of learners to care for patients
- Numerous FB models abound — from the "Feedback Sandwich" to ARCH and ART — with common features with the teacher
  - Asking the learner to self-assess their performance
  - Reinforcing what was done well
  - Confirming/correcting what needs to improve
  - Helping the learner identify next steps to improve

Problem: Feedback Provided/Received

- Feedback remains amongst the lowest rated item on any educational evaluation independent of trainee level or specialty independent of FB model teachers apply, the FB workshops attended, and/or teacher attestations that they give FB
- Recent study on teaching pre-post duty hours revealed that
  - Faculty have less time to provide feedback
  - Residents request more feedback

Objective:

To re-define 1st step in FB process informed by recent evidence on factors influencing trainee perceptions of FB & accuracy of learner self-assessment

Methods:

- Review Literature: Feedback & Self-Assessment
  - Indirect nature of feedback
    - Opportunity spaces: Allow learner “time” to change answer and affirm correct response (2nd chance)
  - Provide clues in follow-up questions: Reframe and ask more specific questions to lead learner to “answer”
  - Reframe the question so that the wrong answer becomes correct
  - Treat wrong answers as possible, but in need for further consideration

- Approach preserves learners self-confidence and esteem and preceptor’s relationship with the learner

- Learners do NOT perceive they have received feedback as they “discovered” the answers

Results: Literature

Tension & Recognition of Receiving Feedback

- Interpretation and uptake of feedback is influenced by trainee’s:
  - Confidence, experience, fear of not appearing knowledgeable
  - Receiving FB is difficult and often doesn’t register with trainees as it strikes at the tension between core trainee needs:
    - Desire to learn/grow to be competent physicians
    - Need to be accepted for who they are
    - Obtaining an optimal final grade

- Example highlighting this tension
  - When teachers open a FB interaction by "asking" learners "How did it go?" Learners want to appear competent — but know they need to learn = "Pretty well... need a few more details on frequency of falls..."

Self-Assessment

- Humans are poor at producing self-generated summative assessments of their own performance or ability
- Why? Generating “accurate” summative self-assessments of one’s own level of performance or ability is particularly challenging due to:
  - Cognitive reasons: Information neglect and memory biases
  - Sociobiological reasons: It is adaptive to maintain an optimistic outlook
  - Social reasons: Not always receiving adequate feedback from peers and supervisors

- Difficulty of self-assessment increases when the “ask” is vague (How do you think it went...?)

Example highlighting this tension

“Welcome to Lake Wobegon, where all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average.” — Garrison Keillor, A Prairie Home Companion

Results: STARCH Feedback Model

1st State Focus of the Feedback

- Literature review highlighted the need to reform feedback model to support:
  - Clarity of “ask” — making the focus on the self-assessment explicit
  - Direct — unambiguous, recognizable feedback

- Explicit discussion of trainee and teacher tensions/needs
- Updated the standard ARCH FB model to include “ate” → STARCH
- Teacher begins by STating the FB focus (e.g., Hx omits key fall risk elements; Dif Dx for dementia)
- Next teacher proceeds with the Ask - to self-assess strengths/weaknesses relative to that focus, Reinforce, Correct, Help steps in ARCH

Test Model in Faculty Development Workshops

- FB workshops have been updated to reflect STARCH with deliberate practice:
  - How to orient learners by reviewing purpose of FB [to promote learner’s growth] and teacher’s role in “STating” FB focus prior to learner self-assessment
  - Teachers then practice STating an identified FB focus to simulated learners

Results

- FB Workshop Ratings: Mean 3.7-4.0 (1=least favorable to 4=most favorable)
  - Learners’ Ratings on Item
    - “teacher provided helpful and timely FB” increased significantly (.40; 5-point scale) 6 months pre/post workshops
  - Learners and Faculty Report being “relieved” that the “what I am thinking” game is replaced by providing specific FB to promote learner growth

Discussion & Future Work

- Adding “STate” to begin the FB interaction is an evidence-based addition to established FB models that is valued by teachers and learners
- Next Steps: Expand model use, develop on-line training materials and infographics, and evaluate its impact using Kirkpatrick levels

References


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