

# TOP 10

## Tips for Linking Outcome to Improvement

An educational resource brought to you by  
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Now that you have developed competency-based curriculum, it is time to move on to mastering the challenges of the Outcome Project Phase 3, which began July 1, 2006. Faculty with experience on performance improvement teams will recognize the concepts inherent in “using resident performance data as the basis for program improvement.” Making those concepts operational is not that easy!

Program Directors and faculty need to work together to implement a system of linking resident performance outcomes to program improvements. Consider:

### **Tip 1: Do not look for a short cut.**

Developing a competency-based curriculum that uses resident performance data to determine ongoing curriculum improvement is a step-by-step process.

### **Tip 2: Keep up with the changes.**

The art and science of competency-based GME is evolving – in exciting new ways! Use the experience of other programs to improve your own efforts.

### **Tip 3: Continue to research your specialty-specific guidelines.**

ACGME’s revised Common Program Requirements, and the evolving changes in the RRCs’ specialty-specific requirements, provide new clarity about teaching objectives, activities, and evaluation tools. Incorporate them to improve your curriculum.

### **Tip 4: Remember the mission.**

Your objective is to assess what the resident has learned and adjust the curriculum as needed to improve overall resident achievements.

### **Tip 5: Begin with clear, measurable objectives.**

Describe attributes of the specific behavior you expect the resident to demonstrate at the end of the rotation.

### **Tip 6: Link the evaluation tools to the objectives.**

Assessing which rotation objectives were achieved adequately is essential to identifying aspects of the curriculum that should be changed.

### **Tip 7: Establish clear expectations of achievement.**

Describe the behavior expected. On a 1-to-9 scale, is a “5” “good enough” in this assessment? What does a “5” look like?

### **Tip 8: Make it possible to succeed!**

Do not try to assess every aspect on each rotation curriculum every year. Choose one or two which represent clear evidence of inadequate achievement of the objectives and begin there.

### **Tip 9: Be realistic.**

Improvements should be data-driven. But the process does not need to sustain scientific method scrutiny to be valuable.

### **Tip 10: Trust yourself and your faculty.**

Few assessments will produce clearly “right answers” – in the data analysis or the appropriate curriculum intervention. Trust the judgment and instincts of your faculty and your own experience, in conjunction with hard performance data, as reasonable guides in the improvement process.

*The most important tip we can offer. . .*

***DON'T GIVE UP!*** Linking residents’ performance outcome data to residency program improvement is a process, not a goal. As the process is repeated year after academic year, it becomes more effective and more satisfying as results become evident.

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