

TOP 10

Tips for Implementing the General Competencies Effectively!

An educational resource brought to you by
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Residency programs have met the challenge of implementing the ACGME six general competencies with varying degrees of success. Five years into the process, some faculty still struggle to name all six. Others have long been fully compliant - and their innovative approaches have improved the educational process.

As GME consultants, we have observed programs at all phases of the struggling-to-successful spectrum. Those who "succeed" - in meeting ACGME's Outcome Project objectives and developing excellent quality residency programs in the process - have some common attributes.

Program Directors striving to make competency implementation effective should consider:

Tip #1: Teach Yourself First

Use the wealth of resources available through ACGME, your medical specialty organization, and professional educators to learn about adult learning, and get sample tools and approaches.

Tip #2: Keep Up with the Changes

The expectations continue to change as the process evolves. Check your RRC's Program Requirements frequently for revised general competency objectives and suggested evaluation tools.

Tip #3: Think Competency Based

The six general competencies are not a list to memorize - they are attributes that alter the way that we teach.

Tip #4: Involve Faculty

Faculty understand, teach, and assess competency-based curriculum most effectively when they have been involved in its development.



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Tip #5: Involve Residents

When the residents understand the intent of each of the general competencies, they may identify effective teaching activities and evaluation tools you never considered!

Tip #6: Implement Curriculum Sequentially

You need clear objectives before you can develop teaching activities or evaluation tools. You also need clear objectives and effective evaluation tools before you can link outcomes to program improvement.

Tip #7: Be Practical

No one can measure everything. Choose "sentinel node" evaluations. If you can't measure it all, measure the one item that will be a good predictor of many others. Record attributes in multiple competency areas during one faculty-resident focused observation.

Tip #8: Live the Message

Encourage faculty to point out the six domains from medical knowledge to systems based practice in each teaching encounter.

Tip #9: Be Innovative

Successful Program Directors use the ideas developed by their peers - and then go on to create educational approaches tailored to their own program's unique challenges and opportunities.

Tip #10: Work with the GMEC

Program Directors are most effective when supported by an effective GMEC. The GMEC has

a critical role to teach, provide resources, monitor, and replicate successful approaches.

Developing curriculum, writing objectives, adding and revising evaluation tools - these activities require a major commitment of time and effort. Promote exponential returns on those investments by creating a top quality learning experience for your residents.

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