

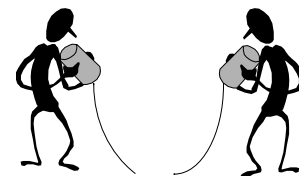
Sources of Friction

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Expectations: What a preceptor expects the student to accomplish and learn may be different from the student's expectations or even beyond the student's capabilities. Expectations and discrepancies need to be communicated clearly between preceptor and student.

Communication Styles: A quiet, reflective member of the relationship may have trouble relating to a direct, confrontational member. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) divides styles into four perspectives: *Extroversion and introversion; sensing and intuitive; thinking and feeling; and judging and perceiving.* Awareness of one's own style assists people to gain insights into themselves and their way of relating to students. Remember, the sincerity of your intentions does not guarantee the purity of your practice!



Preceptor Absences: Sometime a preceptor is absent due to prior commitments or illness. Students may find it hard to adjust to a different preceptor and anxieties and uncertainties arise. This is particularly true when the preceptor-student relationship is a strong, mutually rewarding one. If possible, prearrange a back-up preceptor.

Student Performance: When students struggle in clinical, preceptors can become frustrated. Sometimes they wonder what they are doing wrong. The student who is having performance problems is often anxious about her/his poor performance. Safety, competence and failure to progress are three areas that require faculty involvement to draft a learning contract to guide student improvement.



Evaluation: Evaluation can be a source of role conflict for the preceptor, who is required to function as both confidante and assessor. Evaluation is also a source of anxiety for the student, particularly for those in danger of failing. Evaluation is necessary to the learning process and guides student progress towards meeting course objectives. The faculty advisor facilitates formal evaluations and guides discussions in terms of constructive feedback to aid student performance.

Workplace Stress: Heavy caseloads and balancing the needs of patients with the learning needs of the student can be a source of stress for the preceptor, who may in turn transfer this stress to the student. Bring any concerns you have about your workload to the staff supervisor.



Sources: Myrick & Yonge, 2005; O'Mara, 1997.