Teaching When There's No Time To Teach: Strategies & Techniques for the Clinical Setting

Linda Snell
McGill Centre for Medical Education

Many thanks to Jeff Wiseman who, over the past 15 years, has co-developed much of the content of this session
Goals for the day

- Recognize ‘teachable moments’;
- Describe how to break down a clinical teaching encounter into manageable ‘sections’ that can be taught in a limited time;
- Define and demonstrate a number of teaching strategies that can be used when time is constrained;
- Link these strategies with educational concepts to explain why they might be effective.
Overview

1. Context
2. Philosophy
3. Education concepts
4. Demonstration
5. Key messages
6. Practice
1. Context

- Who are the teachers?
- Who are the learners?
- Where and when does teaching with limited time take place?
Who are the teachers?

- Teachers in clinical setting – any health professional who is...
  - Providing patient care
  - Facilitating learning

- Teachers in classroom setting

- Patients?
Clinical teachers’ domains of knowledge

(Medicine)

Pedagogy

Learners

Patients

Context

Case-based teaching

Irby ‘94
Who are the learners?

- Novice to colleague / practitioner
  - Different levels of learners on same team
  - Interprofessional learning teams
- Patients
Context

Anywhere students, teachers (and patients) collide … and some places they don’t

- Opportunistic
  - Patient-triggered
  - Learner-triggered
  - Teacher-triggered

- Extemporaneous

- ‘Teachable moment’
2. A brief history of ‘no time’

- Most common problem raised by teachers
- Teaching ‘with time’ is preferable
- ‘No time’ is context-based
- ‘No time to teach’ may also mean ‘no time to learn’
- Time is elastic
3. Education concepts

a. The learning cycle
b. Adult learning principles
c. Cognitive apprenticeship
d. The teachable moment
e. Teaching scripts
a. The Learning Cycle

**Reflection**

- Evaluation
- Feedback

**Learning needs**

**Orientation**

- Objectives

**Content**

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**Strategies & Techniques**
When teaching when time is limited . . .
think of the ‘learning cycle’

▶ And focus on one part
of the cycle, one bit of
content, or use one
strategy or technique
b. Adult Learning Principles:

*Students learn best when ...*

- They are actively learning
- Their experience is used
- It is based on problems
- They can apply what they learn
- It is student-centered
- There is a positive learning environment
- They receive feedback
When teaching when time is limited . . .

use adult learning principles

➔ And let the learner

guide the learning
c. Cognitive apprenticeship

Modeling: master teacher demonstrates the skill, thought process or technique

Scaffolding: learner tries part with guidance

Coaching: verbal guidance only

Fading: teacher withdraws, less guidance
Directed learner

Directed self-learner

Self-directed learner
When teaching when time is limited . . .

use the concept of cognitive apprenticeship

- To pick your strategy
  and role related to the
  learner’s level
d. “Teachable Moments”

- A transient opportunity of high learner readiness to learn and a teacher variably poised to make the most of it

- Highly prevalent in clinical work contexts

- Examples?
Examples of Teachable Moments

- A patient awaiting OR has to sign consent
- You need to change the insulin orders for a colleague’s patient while you are on call
- There are 2 pages to answer, 6 new consultations to see, 8 patients to follow up on and you are already late for supper
- You discover that your patient has been given another patient’s medication
- Your patient’s MRI will only be done next week
- The most recent journal in your discipline features a study of a new procedure
A teaching moment can be...

- A 5-minute discussion en route to lunch
- A case review / discussion at 02h30
- Formal bedside teaching rounds
- A mini-lecture or formal class presentation
- A semester with a senior student
- ...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Springboard: word or phrase in your discipline</th>
<th>Content, Concept or Competency</th>
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<td>Teachable Moments:</td>
<td>NTTT Teaching Strategies:</td>
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<td>Clinical work event</td>
<td>What could you teach?</td>
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<td>(Springboard) e.g. YOUR limited teaching time clinical situation that you wrote down at the beginning of this session</td>
<td>Content, Concept or Competency</td>
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e. Teaching Scripts

- Previously prepared, brief, semi-structured teaching

- Based on your experiences and observations:
  - Issues you commonly encounter in your practice
  - Previously observed trainee learning gaps
  - Level of competence of the trainee

- Combines teaching moment, knowledge of learner(s) & teacher expertise / experience

- Perceived by learners to be a reflection of quality

- Increases your ‘repertoire’ for teaching in-the-moment

Torre et al Academic Medicine 2005
Education concepts related to ‘no time’ ...

a. The learning cycle
   - Focus on one part

b. Adult learning principles
   - Let learner guide

c. Cog. apprenticeship
   - Pick your role, strategy

d. Teachable moment
   - Use the framework

e. Teaching scripts
   - Recycle your teaching
Using questions to promote problem solving

What’s the most common teaching strategy used in clinical teaching... at the bedside, on the ward discussing a patient, reviewing a patient in the ER?
Bloom’s taxonomy

Evaluation
Synthesis
Analysis
Application
Comprehension
Knowledge
Evaluation ➔ Choose best? Argue all sides?
Synthesis ➔ Alternatives? New approach? Design?
Analysis ➔ Differential Dx? Etiology?
Application ➔ Use it? Given this patient . . .?
Comprehension ➔ Define? Interpret? Compare/contrast?
Knowledge ➔ Who? What? Name? How many?
5. Key messages

- The contexts where teaching when time is limited are multiple and varied

- Effective teaching strategies used when time is limited can be linked to ‘good’ educational practice
  - Know the ‘indications’ for their use

- When time is not elastic, content is . . .
  - Don’t teach too much!