



# Preceptor Toolbox: Teaching Effectively on the Bench

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# Learning Objectives

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1. Explain the goals and purpose of a clinical preceptor.
2. Identify effective and engaging strategies to teach students in a clinical setting.
3. Describe ways to implement the preceptor toolbox in your laboratory/educational environment.



# What are we supposed to teach?

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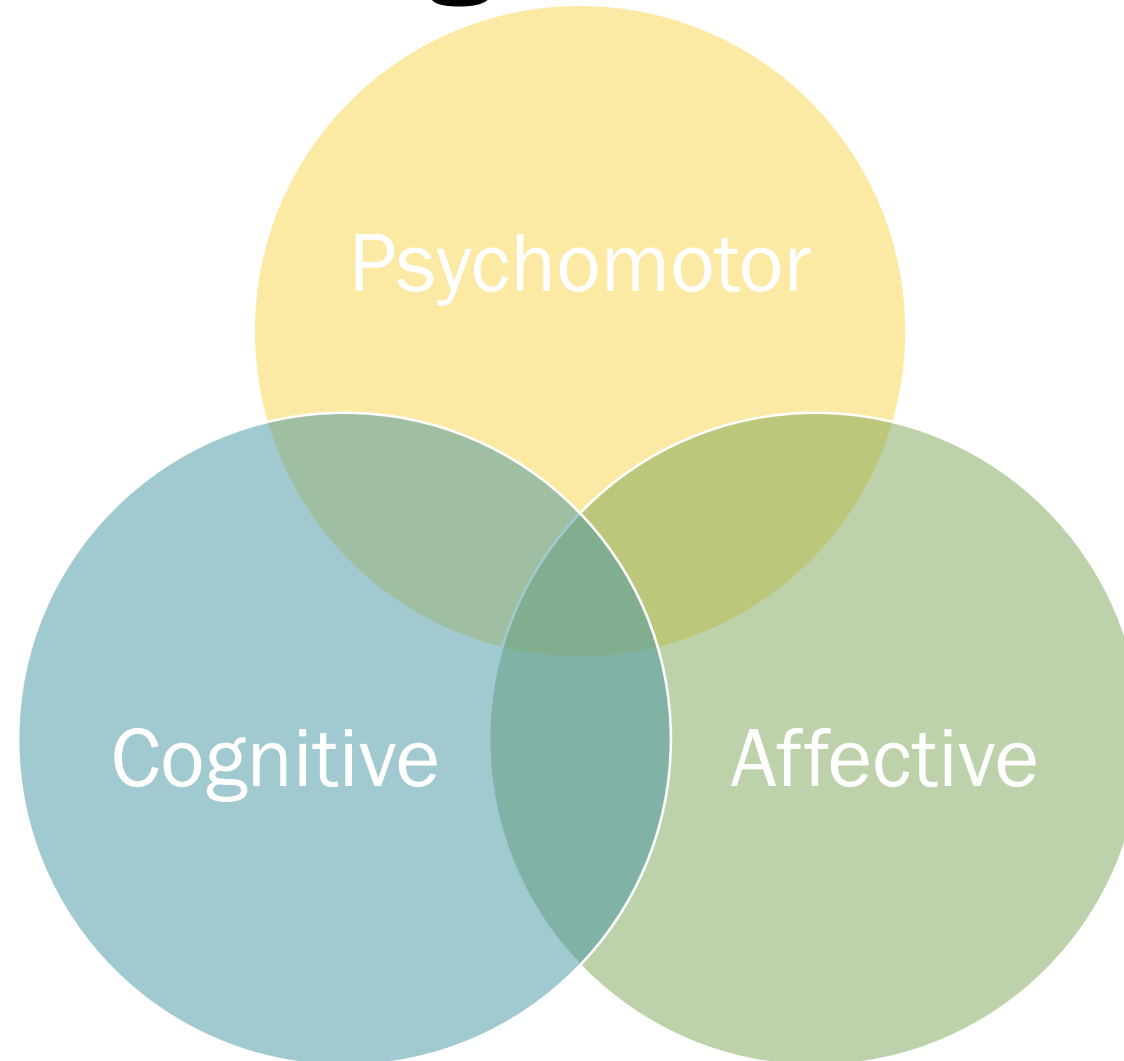
- Accrediting body for Clinical Laboratory Science programs
- Core and unique standards



- Awards certification in various laboratory professions and disciplines
- Content guidelines

# Domains of Learning

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# The importance of the clinical preceptor



# Preceptor Responsibilities



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1. Teaching – 60%
2. Supervising / Coaching – 20%
3. Evaluation – 20%
4. Role modeling professional behavior – 100%

# Common Challenges as a Preceptor

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- Facilitate student learning while still providing adequate patient care
- Manage additional responsibilities such as scheduling, meetings, policy review, analyzer validations, etc.
- Balance teaching with staffing shortages, high test volumes, instrumentation malfunctions
- Find valuable education opportunities on a low-volume day or in a department that has consolidated testing

## Fixed Mindset

Avoids challenges

This will never get better

I don't have time for this

We're too short-staffed to teach

## Growth Mindset

Embraces challenges

This will take time and hard work

Good things take time

I'm teaching our future staff

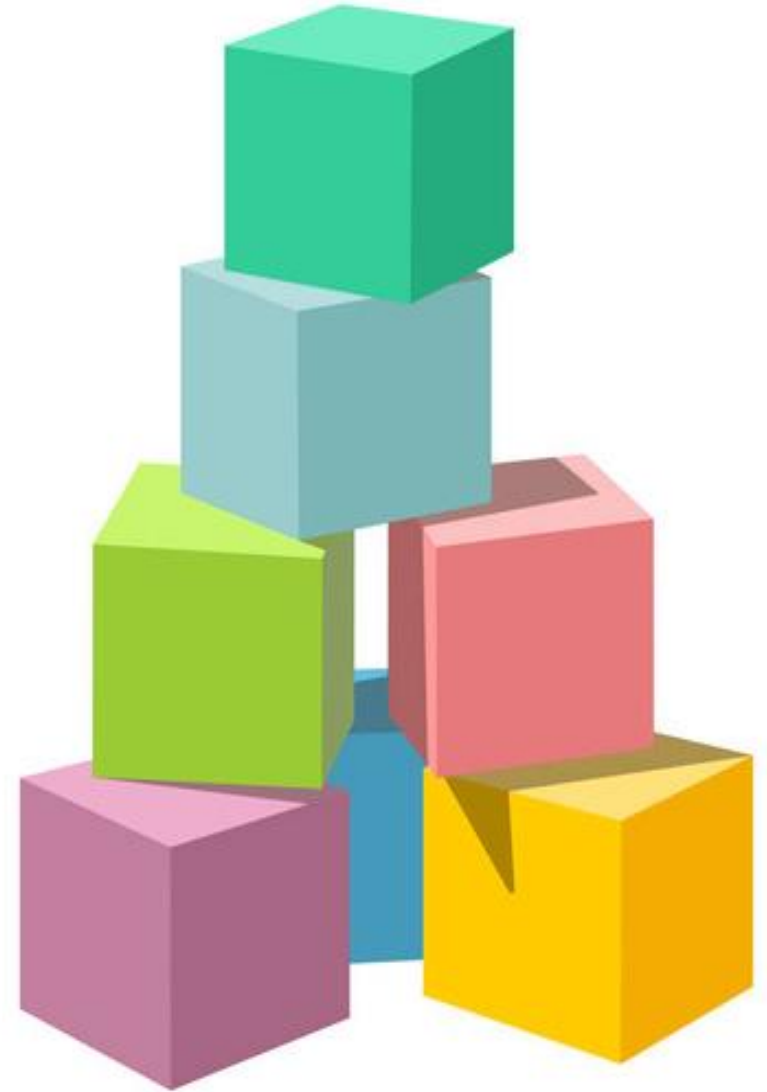
**“Get to” not “Have to”**



# Benefits to Precepting

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- Delivers a degree of satisfaction
- Mastery of your own skillsets
- Enhances professional development
- Adds to the meaningful purpose of your work



# Qualities of an Effective Preceptor

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- Emitting an enthusiasm for teaching
- Exhibiting good interpersonal communication skills
- Serving as a positive role model for students
- Demonstrating a balanced perspective on teaching and learning
- Embracing a sense of teacher identity



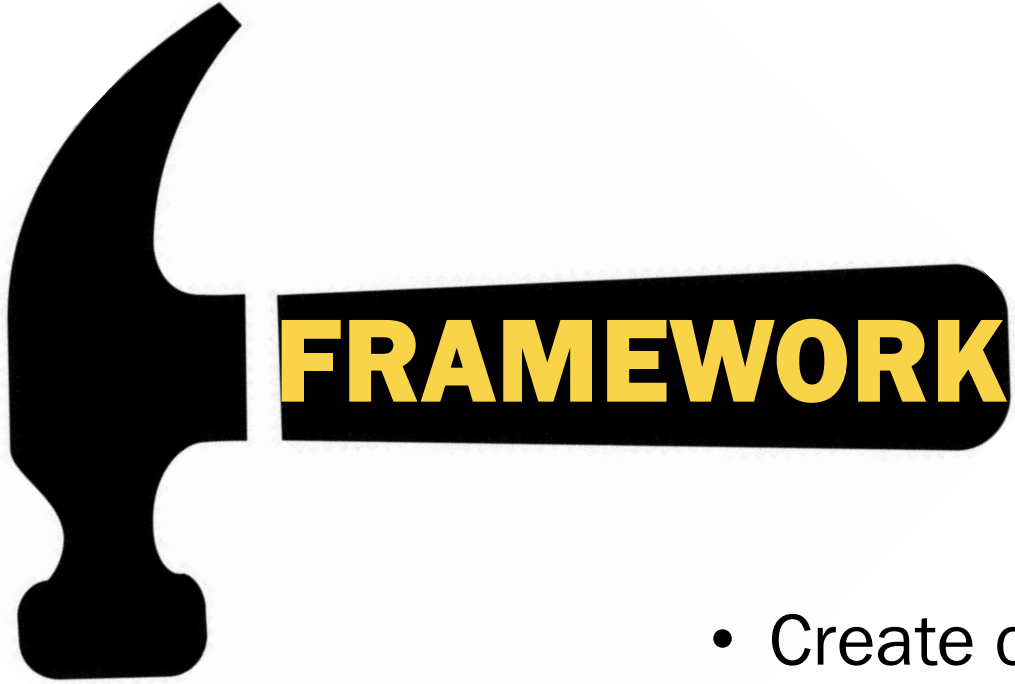
# PRECEPTOR TOOLBOX



- Be patient!
  - Students learn in different ways and at different paces
- Be open to adjusting the learning environment
- Allow students to take the lead
- Remain fluid with ebbs and flows of the laboratory- staffing, workload, etc.




- Gather background information
- Utilize goals/objectives/checklists
- Additional resources may include policies, job aids, or textbooks
  - Promote independency and critical thinking skills
- Work from the ground up



- Create connections and bridge the gap between classroom learning and clinical practice
  - Ask questions!
  - Share your expertise and prior experiences
  - Pinpoint unique scenarios that don't necessarily follow the textbook
  - Map it out!



# FEEDBACK

- Evaluation of the student
  - Effectively give feedback to promote a growth mindset
  - Tell the student what they are doing well
  - Offer comments and suggestions that are constructive
  - Be honest!
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# At the construction site

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Example preceptor scenarios



You are precepting a student in the Blood Bank. Shortly after morning start up the analyzer produces an error, preventing you from utilizing the instrumentation for patient testing. The OR calls inquiring about a cooler of blood products they are waiting on. Shortly after, an MTP activation is initiated in ED.



### Possible tools to utilize:

- Remain calm!
- Seek reinforcement from fellow coworkers
- Encourage student observation
- Reflect afterwards

## **Scenario #1**

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A student is completing their Chemistry rotation, and you **get to** be their preceptor for the day! The department is short one tech and another just called-in ill, leaving one person to cover the entire department in addition to teaching.



### Possible tools to utilize:

- Stay positive/growth mindset
- Involve the student as much as possible
- Assign the student unknowns to complete
- Reassure the student

## Scenario #2

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You work in a smaller hospital laboratory and the test volume is rather low on a specific day. You are precepting a student and struggling to find enough to do to keep them occupied while on-site. You want their time to be spent wisely but there is not much to see or do today.



### Possible tools to utilize:

- Embrace the opportunity!
- Dive deeper into the content
- Involve the student in other tasks/responsibilities
- Create hands-on activities

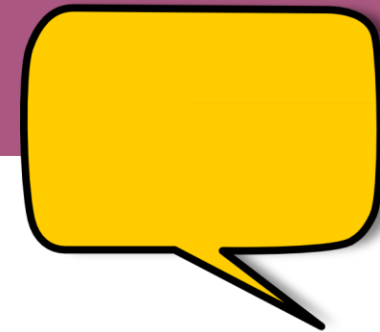
## Scenario #3

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A coworker in the Hematology department really enjoys precepting students and does a great job teaching. It's been frequently noticed, however, that this particular preceptor gossips about other coworkers and complains about numerous aspects of the job in front of the student.

### Possible tools to utilize:

- Redirect the conversation
- Speak to the student separately
- Encourage professional values



## **Scenario #4**

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You have the privilege of precepting a student frequently throughout their Microbiology rotation. However, the student consistently arrives 15 minutes late to rotation with various excuses each day as to why they are tardy.



### Possible tools to utilize:

- Provide honest and constructive feedback
- Evaluate the student appropriately
- Involve the Program Director, Clinical Coordinator, or Manager as needed

## Scenario #5

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# References & Contact Information

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Miller, W. (2021). *Strategies for clinical teaching in the health professions: a guide for instructors*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

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