

Priming Student for Patient Encounter

“It is not enough to do your best; you must know what to do, and then do your best.”

-- W. Edwards Deming

Briefly preparing students for patient encounters (whether with you or on their own) helps them to focus on relevant information and specific skills for each experience. Students can then set and achieve one or two specific learning goals with each patient. Following are a few suggestions for priming a student for patient encounters:

1. Have the student review the patient's record and reason for the visit beforehand.
2. Provide a brief overview of the patient's medical and social background (if you know the patient).
3. Tell student what you would like her to focus on (patient issues, specific examination).
4. If the student is seeing the patient, set time limits for her to conduct these activities.
5. Ensure that the student is comfortable performing the activities and offer to work with her on tasks that she is not yet familiar performing.