



FACULTY-IN-TRAINING PROGRAM

LEARNING PLAN*

Learning plans allow you to specify learning goals and activities that you (rather than someone else) choose. In them you state what you want to learn and describe specifically how and when you are going to learn it. You will also describe how you are going to prove to yourself and others that you have accomplished what you set out to learn. Learning plans include:

Objectives: What are you going to learn? Make this as specific as possible. Your objectives should correspond to what you think you want to know. Examples of specific objectives are “To learn how to do a good cardiac exam” or “To learn to use empathic statements to talk with patients about their feelings.”

Resources and Strategies: How are you going to accomplish your objective? For the above objectives, you might plan to read physical diagnosis or interviewing texts and practice with your attending or resident.

Target Date: This should be a specific date by which you will complete the activity.

Evidence: How will you know that you have accomplished your objective? There are numerous options here, including didactic testing, writing essays, keeping logs, being observed by others, and many others. Since this is evidence for your self-assessment, subjective feelings are also important, such as feeling more comfortable about doing a procedure, talking with patients, having patients feel better after you do so.

Verification: How will others know that you have accomplished your objective? Here the emphasis is on concrete evidence. What evidence will you offer in order to demonstrate accomplishment?

Properly used, learning agreements can free you up to learn about things that you think are important to you, and help you overcome problems or deficiencies that you have identified for yourself. They help you to be an active learner rather than being dependent upon others for teaching and evaluation. This is not the way it always is in medical training, but it is the way it should be most of the time!

*Adapted from Malcolm Knowles’s The Modern Practice of Adult Education, New York: Cambridge, The Adult Education Company, 1980



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Learner _____ Dates _____ Faculty _____

OBJECTIVE	RESOURCES / STRATEGIES	TARGET DATE	EVIDENCE	VERIFICATION