

Trainers presentation; recent research in medical education

The influence of medical students' self-explanation on diagnostic performance. Med Ed 2011 45 688-95

Instructing medical students to generate self explanations while they are solving diagnostic problems improves subsequent tests in areas where they are inexperienced.

Medical students were given clinical scenarios to "solve" The scenarios were of different levels of difficulty Half the group 36 were given instructions on generating self explanations and half were not. There was no direct feed back. Later the group was tested again on different but similar scenarios and the experimental group did better on more difficult scenarios; there was no difference between the groups on the easier scenarios.

Self explanation has been used in psychology, biology and physics and shown to improve performance.

What is self explanation? Those who have done advanced driver training will have had some experience of this.

Studies in physics, chemistry and more recently chess in first year psychology students in the Netherlands how the superiority of self explanation. If you do it in pairs the more experienced practitioner also benefits.

How could this be used in our work? Looking at consultations can be helpful; difficult to do out loud but can practice while watching videos then do it silently. Another area is looking at results and deciding what to do about them.

Mentoring The impact of mentoring during postgraduate training on doctors' career success Med Ed 2011 45 488-96 and London Deanery paper on Mentoring available through their site. (mentoring.londondeanery.ac.uk and look for the download called First 500)

Mentoring helps people over periods of change. This might be becoming a trainer, starting as a principal or deciding to undertake GPwSI training. There is evidence from Switzerland that mentoring improves career success but not job satisfaction; London found some evidence that it does both.

In London the mentee chooses the mentor from a short list. The process is time limited to 4 sessions over 6hours. The mentors are all teachers in some form. It is not just trainees who apply.

Should we ask the East of England Deanery for a formal mentoring system?

Asking the right question

Construct alignment improves the performance of workplace-based assessment scales Med Ed 2011 45 560-69

Non-compound questions are more reliable than compound questions on matched multi-source feedback instruments Med Ed 2011 45 843-48

Old rating

Performed below level expected during Foundation Programme

New rating

Demonstrates little knowledge and lacks ability to evaluate issues, resulting in only a rudimentary contribution to the management plan

MacKillop et al changed the questions as well on an MSF this time which produced a longer instrument but asked the same questions as their original shorter one but produced more reliable results