TEACHING THAT COUNTS:

TAILORING YOUR TEACHING TO THE INDIVIDUAL LEARNER

1 TAKE A HISTORY

Get to know the learner by asking them:
- What is your level of training?
- What did you do before medical school?
- How much experience have you had in emergency medicine?
- What do you want to do after your training (e.g. plans for residency or after residency)?

✓ **This shows the learner you are invested in their learning**, and gives you information that will be required for tailoring your teaching to the learner's needs.

2 NEGOTIATE LEARNING GOALS

Gauge their learning goals
Ask: "What areas of emergency medicine do you find challenging?" "What would you like to work on today?"

Let them know your goal is to facilitate the fine tuning of their skills, and that you will give them feedback throughout the shift.

Lay out expectations for case presentations. Give them a general idea of how long their presentations should take, and tell them to commit to a diagnosis.

3 DIAGNOSE THE LEARNER'S NEEDS

1 **Talk less, listen more**
Wait at least 3-7 seconds after asking a question. Learners will likely give a more thought out answer, giving you a better idea of their clinical reasoning and gaps in their knowledge.

2 **Ask open ended questions**
E.g. say "tell me what you know about aortic dissection". This will give you an idea of their baseline knowledge, and prevent teaching them something they already know, or aren't ready to learn.

3 **Directly observe the learner**
- Ask the learner to demonstrate a physical exam maneuver
- Listen to the history through the curtain
- Observe the learner explaining the management plan to a patient

4 TAILOR TEACHING MOMENTS

Based on the learner's baseline knowledge
Choose a teaching point that corrects or builds upon the learner's answer to your question.

Based on the learner's level of training
For example, if you have a PGY3-EM resident who will soon write her CFPC(EM) exam, you might choose teaching moments that highlight principles you think are highly testable.

Based on the learner's interests
Ask **"what if?"** to make a case more relevant to the learner's interests. E.g. if an OB resident sees a patient with shortness of breath, ask them "what if this patient was pregnant?", "how would that change your management?"

References:
1. Emergency Medicine Cases, Episode 98 "Teaching on Shift" with Amal Mattu and Rick Penciner. https://emergencymedicinecases.com/teaching-on-shift/
2. Highland, J., Druck, J. (2010) "Effective clinical teaching by residents in emergency medicine", *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, 55(5), 434-439.
Created by: Krista Dowhos, MD, PGY1 Family Medicine, Alim Nagji, MD, CCFP (EM) and Jonathan Sherbino, MD, FRCPC.