

5 Guiding Principles for Clinical Supervision Success

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While supervision in the allied health field is not new, some of the challenges that face those just entering clinical supervision have only developed in recent years. Here, we'll explore those challenges, as well as responses that will set you up for supervision success.

Whether you finally feel confident enough in your clinical skills to share them with an early career professional, or your supervisor has asked you to provide clinical hours for a few students, being armed with these five best practices will ensure you get off to a great start.

1. Know (and Follow) Supervision Guidelines

Before you agree to supervisory work, make sure your building administrators are on board. This is especially true if the person you will be supervising does not work for your company. Next, make sure any required paperwork is signed and that you are covered by your liability insurance. Do you know what the guidelines of supervision are for your specific setting (i.e., hospital, long-term care facility, private practice, or school)? If not, find out what they are to ensure you are compliant with them from the start. Once you have reviewed the guidelines for your setting, check state, regional and national guidelines and regulations. A firm

grasp of these will prevent any surprises down the line that could lead to your students' experience not being counted.

2. Emphasize the Importance of Good “Netiquette”

Consider the role that digital and social media will play in the clinical teaching experience. While the internet can provide a wealth of information, it can also be used in ways that inadvertently create ethical, moral, and privacy issues and lead to breaches of confidentiality. Your understanding of the guidelines and regulations regarding the appropriate use of electronic media is essential to preventing such breaches. Make sure your supervisee understands not only the “netiquette”_rules for social media but HIPAA laws as well.

3. Utilize “Reflective Practice” in Clinical Teaching

Using interactive teaching methods is an unwritten rule worth following. One such method is **Reflective Practice**, which helps students and early career professionals become critical thinkers. Reflective Practice is the purposeful contemplation of thoughts and feelings regarding a particular experience. It allows students to understand the effects of their actions and make any necessary adjustments before encountering that situation again. This could look like a clinician analyzing a therapy session, deciding what went well or where challenges occurred, and adjusting accordingly before the next session. This type of reflection can be done through journaling, **self-SOAP**, or **supervisor feedback**. Reflective Practice is a useful tool for the supervisor also, as it can provide a window into areas where the student may need extra guidance.

4. Grow Your Cultural Competency

As a supervisor, it is critical to be able to see the world through the eyes of another. Allied health professionals are often trained to work with culturally diverse patients, but this same training is not incorporated into one's interactions with clinical students, colleagues, and other professionals. Take measures to understand the **characteristics of a culturally competent supervisor** and inform yourself about the ways you can proactively incorporate these characteristics into your clinical supervisory role.

5. Share Your Expertise Confidently

It is an honor to be able to share your knowledge and experience with others. While starting this new role may come with feelings of nervousness, remember that you have relevant knowledge and useful clinical skills to pass on. While your clinical students will certainly be relying on you for your wisdom and experience, your confidence will equally be expressed in your ability to build supportive relationships with them, practice good listening skills to better guide them, and inspire them as they face the challenges that lie ahead on their journeys to becoming better clinicians.



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Dr. Katrina E. Miller's commitment to communication empowerment spans more than 25 years and has improved the lives of countless patients, as well as the more than 300 novice speech-language pathologists she has trained. As a college professor at North Carolina Central University, Dr. Miller founded the Neurogenic Aphasia Group, affectionately referred to as NAG, to provide group speech therapy to Durham residents living with aphasia as the result of strokes or traumatic brain injuries. This program also provided graduate-level speech-language pathology students the opportunity to be trained and educated in the area of adult neurogenic disorders. Dr. Miller has training and expertise in education and clinical supervision. She also has experience counseling persons with communication disorders and mentoring young professionals. A highly sought-after national and international speaker and teacher, Dr. Miller has spent time in China, where she created a summer program for children with communication disorders. She continues to teach and train young professionals across diverse backgrounds and considers it part of her life's mission to fully contribute to the fields of education and speech pathology. Dr. Miller is a board member of National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH) and serves as its affiliate chair.