

Constructing a Case-Based Learning (CBL) Session



DEVELOP SEQUENTIAL CASE LAYOUT with INTENTIONAL INTERRUPTIONS

! Remember that most of a CBL session should be learners (students) talking.

Faculty Goals:

- Plan a session that lays out the case sequentially using a realistic clinical scenario and decide what sections will be revealed.
- Incorporate intentional interruptions in the case - opportunities for learners to apply prior knowledge and work through the case.



(Bowe et al., 2009)



POSING POWERFUL QUESTIONS

Goal: Create open-ended trigger questions for class discussion and interaction based on the learners' level and knowledge using a "funnel" approach.

- Start with broad, open-ended questions¹ and **wait for learners to discuss and respond.**
- Narrow the scope by posing questions about fundamental, core assumptions² and **wait for learners to discuss and respond.**

*What are the problems or issues in the case?
What anatomic structures and physiological processes are most likely involved?*

*What problems or issues are most important?
How do these problems relate to the disruption in the body's homeostasis?*

*What would you summarize as the most important problem in the case?
How do the different problems relate to each other?*

*What are all of the possible differential diagnoses in this case?
What might be the possible diseases/underlying mechanisms?*

*What are the most likely diagnoses?
Why? How does this disease typically present?
How does this match or not match the patient presentation?*

*What diagnostic tests would most likely confirm the diagnosis?
What are the best treatment options?
What is the optimal management plan?*

- When preparing to transition from one section to the next, ask an open-ended summary question.²



CBL SESSION MANAGEMENT TIPS

- Use a guided worksheet with questions.
- Allow time** for each small group to work through questions in a section of a case and type/write answers on the guided worksheet.
- Wait for learners to respond to questions – silence is okay!**
[Hint: Most of a CBL session should be learners talking, discussing, and responding to questions with minimal faculty commentary.]
- Walk throughout room and call on different small groups to share their responses for a question.
[Hint: Incorrect responses can create an opportunity to clarify common misconceptions especially when other learners clarify with the correct rationale.]
- After groups of learners have had an opportunity to offer responses and discuss, faculty disclose correct answers and provide quick summary/take-home points.
[Hint: Stand in the front/center of the room when giving quick summary/take-home points and disclosing answers.]

In the session, encourage learners to:

- Identify and prioritize list of issues and problems in context of situation
- Interpret information & data
- Explore options for action/intervention and rationale
- Consider potential outcomes
(Bowe et al., 2009)



Reminder:

Most of a CBL session should be learners talking. Allow time for discussion and for moments of silence when learners respond to questions.

REFERENCES

- Bowe, C. M., Voss, J., & Aretz, H. T. (2009). [Case method teaching: An effective approach to integrate the basic and clinical sciences in the preclinical medical curriculum](#). *Medical Teacher*, 31, 834-841. doi: 10.1080/01421590902922904
- C. Roland Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard Business School. (2008). *Questions for Class Discussions*. Retrieved from President and Fellows of Harvard College at https://www.hbs.edu/teaching/Documents/Questions_for_Class_Discussions_rev.pdf