

# What Makes a Good Clinical Teacher?

Rick Forster, MD

Mary Philbin, EdM



**TOT Session 1 – November 18-19, 2022**

# Learning Objectives:

*By the end of the session, participants will be able to:*

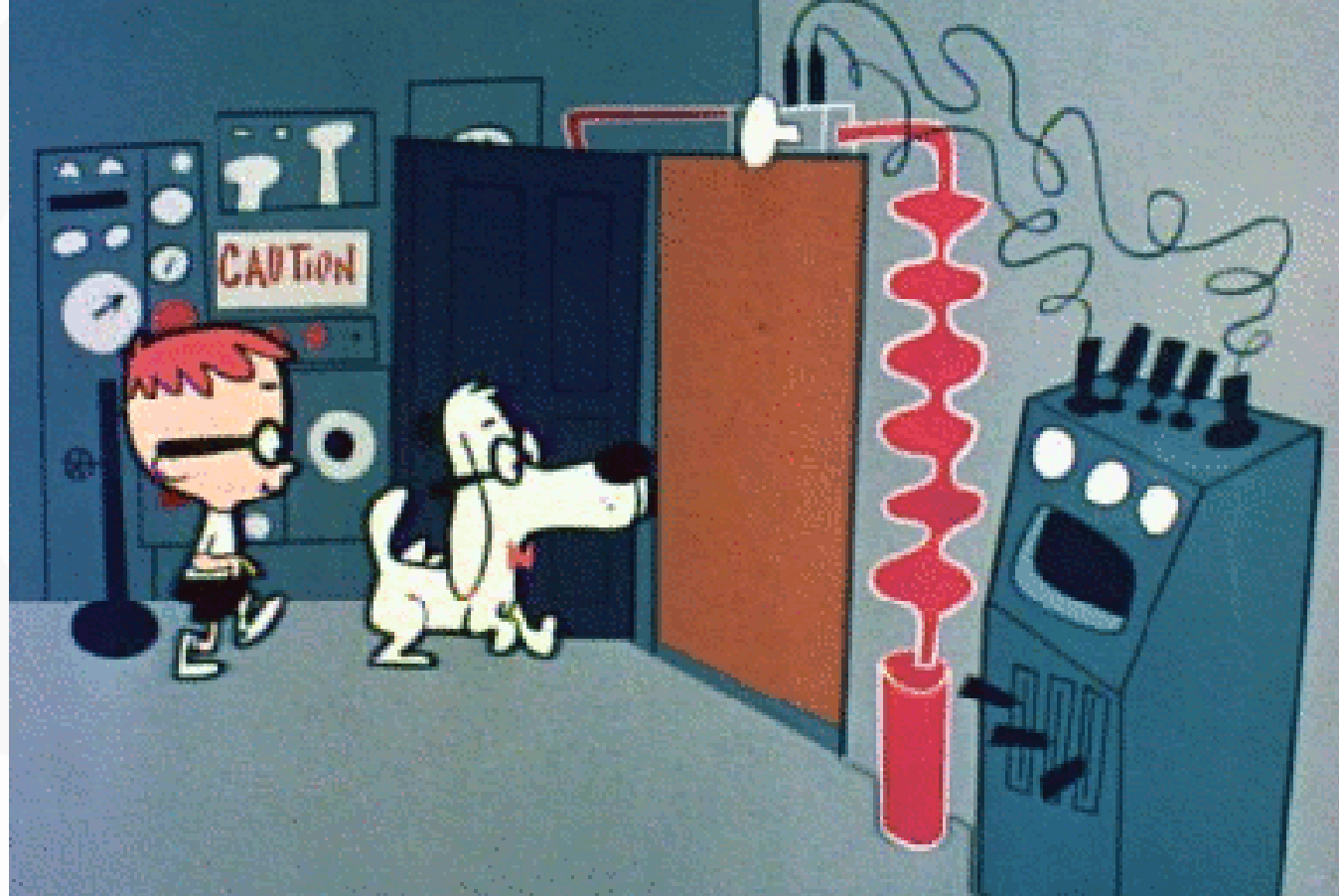
- Define the attributes of a good clinical teacher
- Discuss how to prepare for teaching
- Identify 1-3 methods to engage learners
- Discuss 1-3 teaching strategies to support learning

## Questions for you:

Is there a  
gene for good  
teaching?

Are good  
teachers born  
... or made?

# Your best (clinical) teachers



# Any Teachers You'd Like to Forget?



# **A Pediatrician, a Resident, and a Medical Student Walk Into a Clinic**

Is humor appropriate in medical teaching?

- Double edged sword
- Has positive effects on stress and cortisol levels in pediatric patients
- Causing a learner to smile or laugh provides evidence of engagement/lessens social distance between teacher and student
- Derogatory, cynical or hostile humor can marginalize learners and manifest as microaggressions
- It is a tool that should be handled appropriately

- RA Dudas, MS Ryan, SL Bannister - Pediatrics, 2021

# Principles of good clinical teaching from educational theory

- Focus on **facilitating** rather than didactic teaching
- Foster a **sense of belonging** for the learner
- Support **active participation**
- Involve the **whole team** in supporting learning
- **Be explicit** in learning in everyday practice
- Make powerful use of **reflection** and **feedback**
- Avoid humiliation = assure **psychological safety**
- Facilitate development of **self-direction** in learners
- Consider yourself a professional **role model** at all times
- Crossland, Charlotte. [www.wfsahq.org/resources/update-in-anaesthesia](http://www.wfsahq.org/resources/update-in-anaesthesia), 2021

# What the Literature Says

...

From some of the ‘giants’:

- David Irby, PhD 1978 - 2000
- Jack Ende, MD 1997

And a comprehensive lit review

- Sutkin et. al. 2008



# Effective clinical teachers – Irby (2000)

- Enthusiasm
- Orient learners
- Teach around cases – make it relevant and applicable
- Assign Responsibility / Autonomy to learners
- Demonstrate skills (model)
- Ask questions
- Give feedback

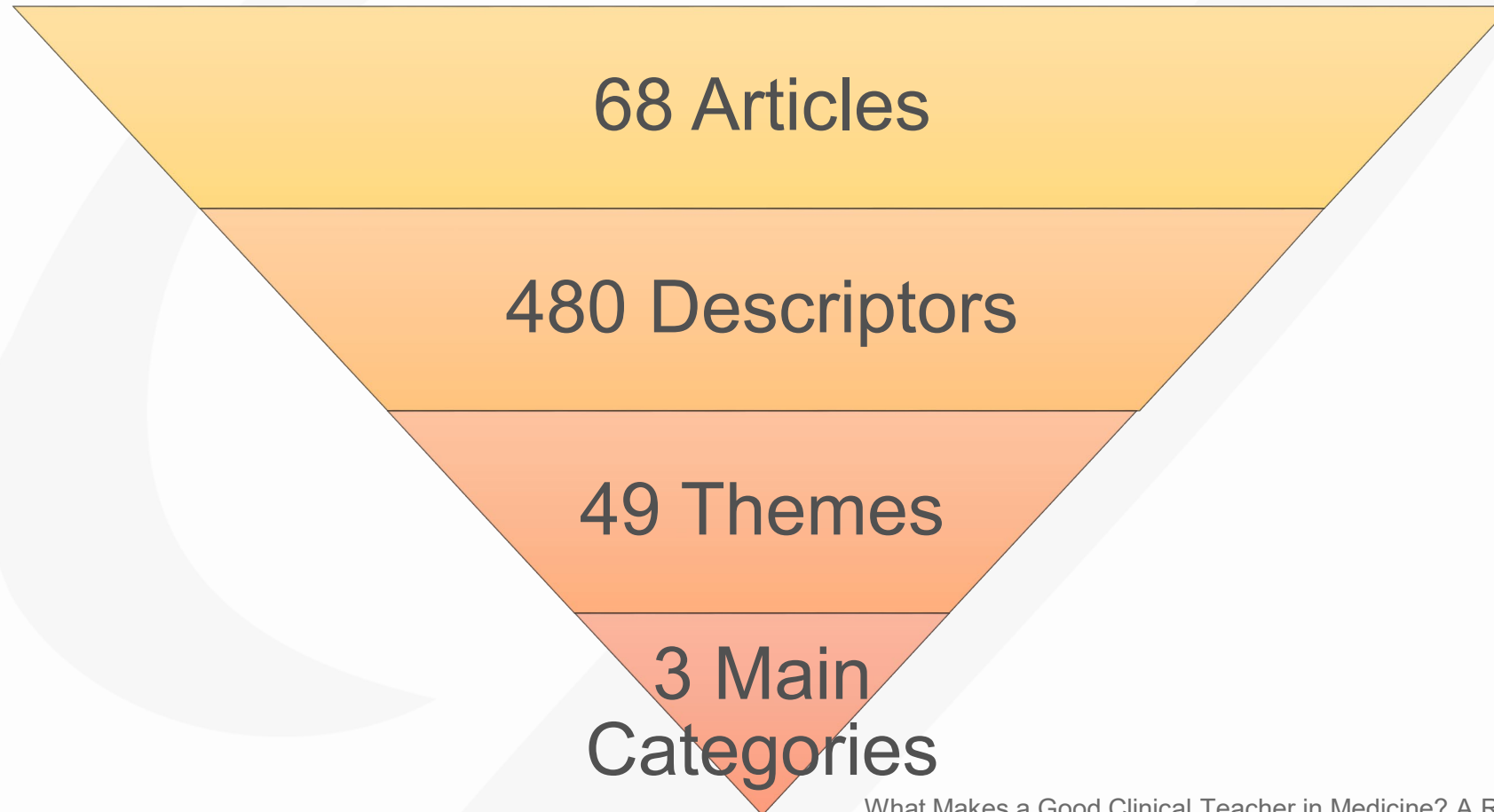
# What Makes a Good Teacher?

What Makes a Good Clinical Teacher in Medicine? A  
Review of the Literature

Sutkin, Gary MD; Wagner, Elizabeth; Harris, Ilene PhD;  
Schiffer, Randolph MD

Academic Medicine: May 2008 – Volume 83 – Issue 5 pp  
452-466

# What Makes a Good Teacher?



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# Category 1: Characteristics of Good Physicians



- Medical/clinical knowledge
- Clinical/technical skills
- Leadership/admin skills
- Accept uncertainty in medicine

## Category 2: Characteristics of Good Teachers



- Have + relationships w/students
- Give effective explanations
- Show knowledge of teaching skills
- Encourage active work

## Category 3: Good Human Characteristics



- Patient
- Good work/life balance
- Virtuous
- Sense of humor
- Self-insight
- Altruistic

# **5 Most Common Themes of 480 Descriptors**

- Medical/clinical knowledge (30)
- Clinical and technical skills/competence, clinical reasoning (28)
- **Positive relationships w/students and supportive environment (27)**
- **Communication skills (21)**
- **Enthusiasm (51)**

## **NOTE:**

- **2/3 of themes and descriptors were noncognitive.**
- Cognitive skills can be taught and learned, albeit with difficulty,
- Noncognitive ones are more difficult to develop and teach to others.



# Clinical Learning is Experiential Learning

- A **designed** learning experience
- Knowledge, skills, and values developed from direct experiences outside traditional academic setting
- Uses:
  - reflection,
  - critical analysis
  - synthesis
- Provide opportunities to:
  - take initiative,
  - make decisions,
  - be accountable for the results (learn from experiences – both mistakes and successes)
  - engage intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially, or physically

**... That Requires Preparation &  
Planning by the Teacher**

# ... That Requires Preparation & Planning by the Teacher

- **Plan** for it
  - objectives
  - defined outcomes
- **Engage** learners (raise awareness)
  - Questions
  - Demonstrations
- **Review** and reflect/debrief
- Include substitute or additional experiences such as Simulation

# **Before teaching.... Ende (1997)**

Ask yourself questions:

- What do I hope to accomplish?
- Who are my learners?
- How will I engage the learners?
- How can I meet the needs of all learners? (think of your first years as well as your advanced learners)
- How will I organize my teaching?
  
- Was it successful?

# Methods to Engage Learners

Create a collaborative learning environment

Use a ‘hook’

- Demonstrate relevance / importance
- The Patient Case
- The Patient in front of you

Questions

- What do you know about ...
- What do you want to know about ...
- What if ...

Discussion

- Small groups
- Pair / Share

Reflect or recall individually – take-aways

# Strategies to Support Learning

- Set the stage
  - Context
  - Framework
  - Learners' experience/comfort
- FEEDBACK
- Debrief the experience
- Establish next steps – an action plan

# Key Points:

- Know your audience (and their needs – more on this later!)
- Ensure success by planning your teaching sessions / encounters
  - Set some objectives for the learner
  - Identify your own objectives and desired outcomes
  - Deliberately engage learners
  - Provide feedback and action plans
  - Get feedback from the learners

One of the best feelings in the world is the one you get when you teach another human being and recognize that they have internalized, conceptualized and understood that which they've been taught. The feeling is akin to **giving** a stranger or loved one **a gift**. Maybe the best way to describe it is the feeling of **gratitude**.



Teaching others really is **an art**. You have to be willing to **humble** yourself, in order to make yourself approachable to others so that they can let you in to the most vulnerable pieces of themselves to learn. Being on Wards as a second year taught me this. But is also where I learned how to be a leader. I learned how to be **compassionate**, ready to **engage in teaching (and leaning)**, and most importantly learned how to be **available to** those who need you.