

Writing Meaningful Comments: Moving Beyond “Keep Reading”

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You did well. Keep practicing. You just need more exposure to baseball.



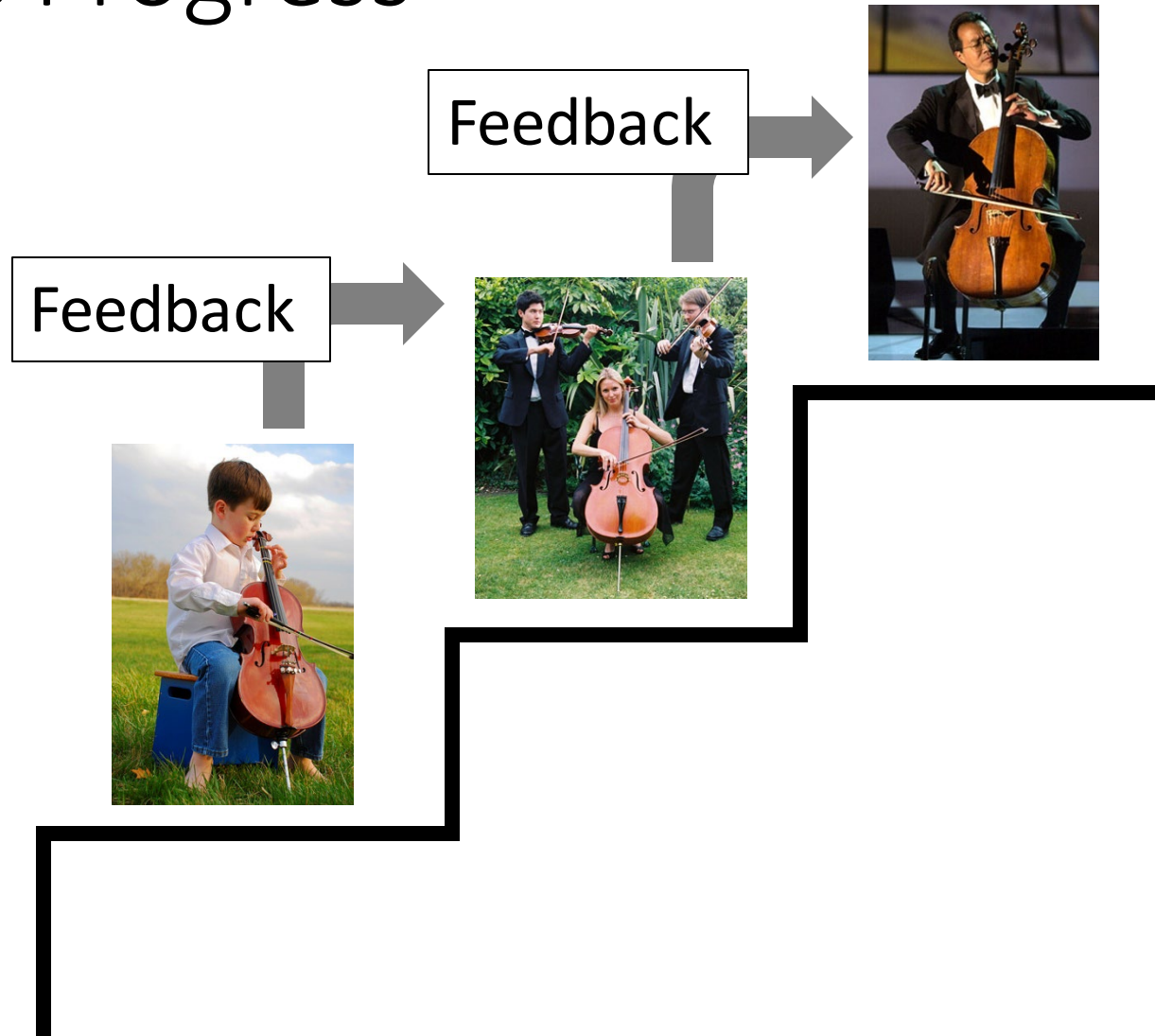
Feedback Is Critical As We Learn



- From ourselves
- From others
- From a coach/expert

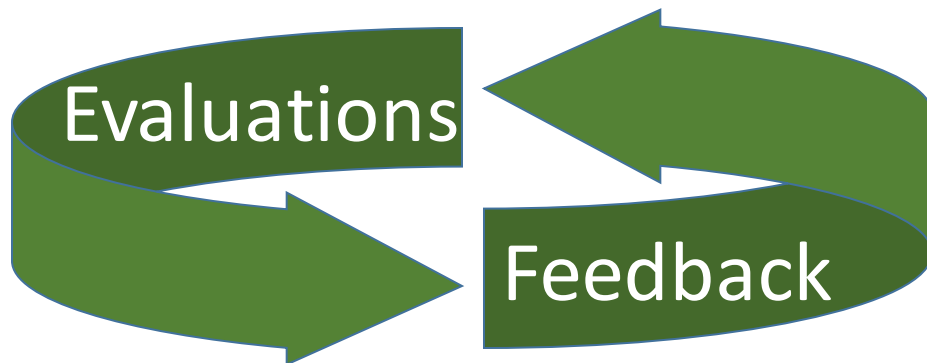


Feedback Helps Us Progress



How Do We Give Feedback to Students?

- Verbally
 - In the moment
 - At the end of the week/rotation
- Written
 - Clinical evaluations



Verbal
feedback



Written
feedback



Wait... Aren't Evaluations For A Grade?



Wait... Aren't Evaluations for a Grade?

Formative

Points out strengths/weaknesses

Used to shape development

Focused on *progress*

Eg, comments on your homework

Summative

Compares to a standard

Used to make decisions

Focused on *achievement*

Eg, final exam grade



Summative: “Your dish wasn’t good enough to make it to the final round.”

Formative: “Your dish was well cooked but needed more seasoning.”



Summative: “You’re about where you should be for a third year”

Formative: “You develop broad differentials, but you need to use the exam and labs to prioritize them better.”

Who Uses These Evaluations?



The Student



Student Progress and Promotions Committee



Office of Medical Education

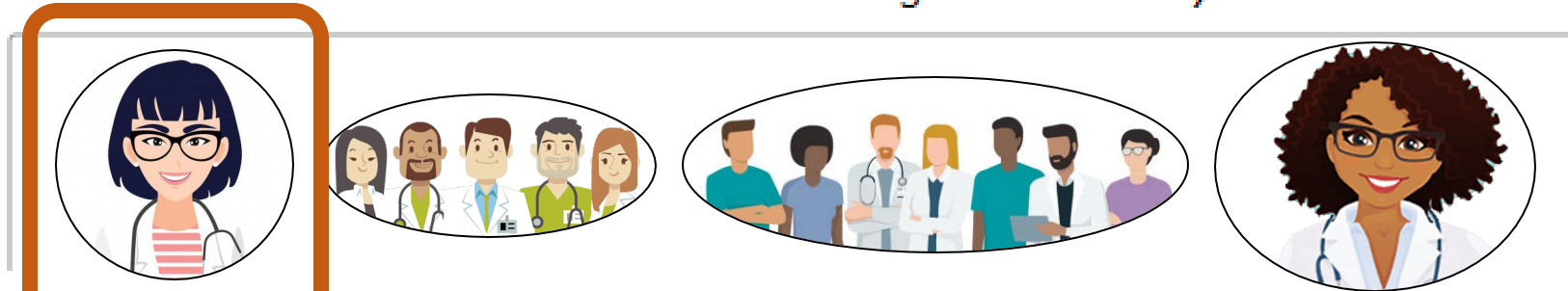


Residency Program Director

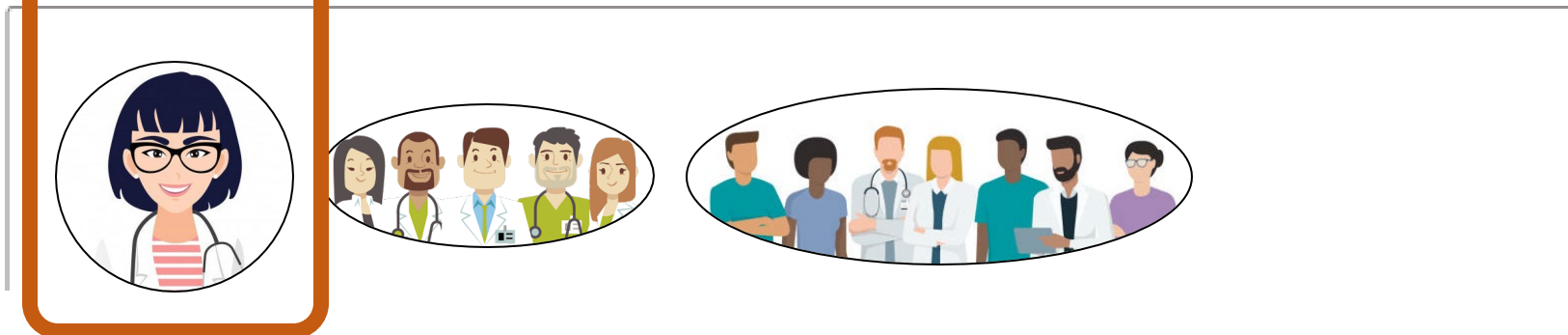


Two Different Boxes for Comments

13.* Please comment on this student's overall performance. The comments may be included VERBATIM in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). (Note: You must provide written comments if the 1st or 4th ratings are chosen).

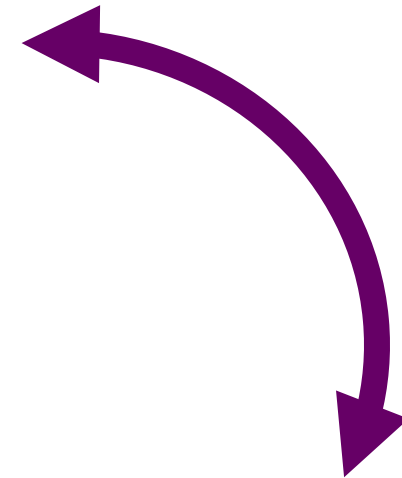


14. Please comment on areas where the student's performance will benefit from enhanced skill development. These comments WILL NOT appear in the MSPE.



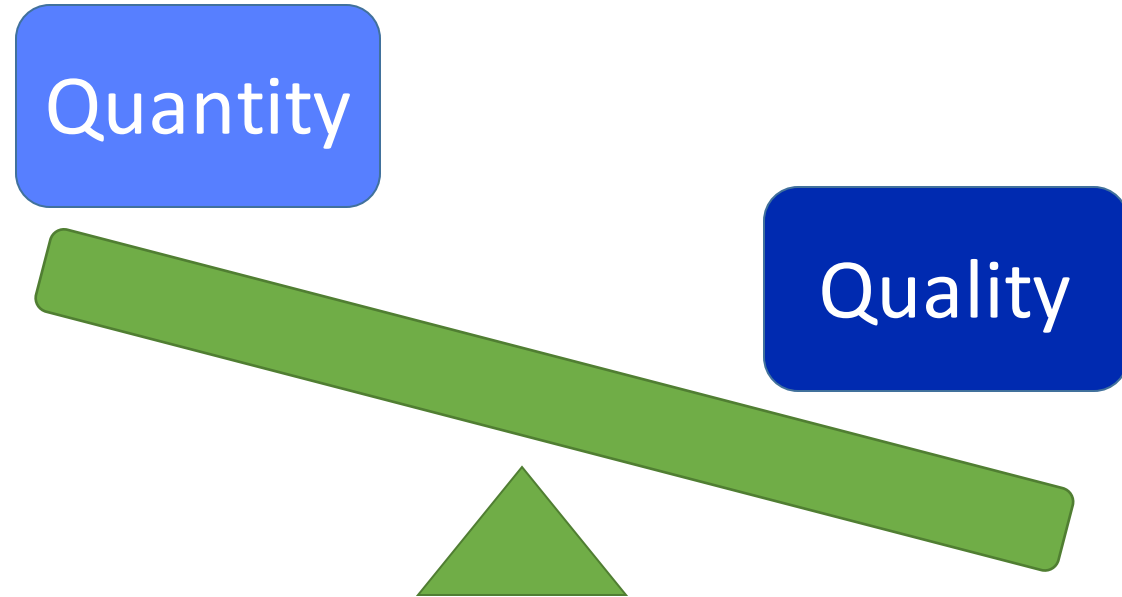
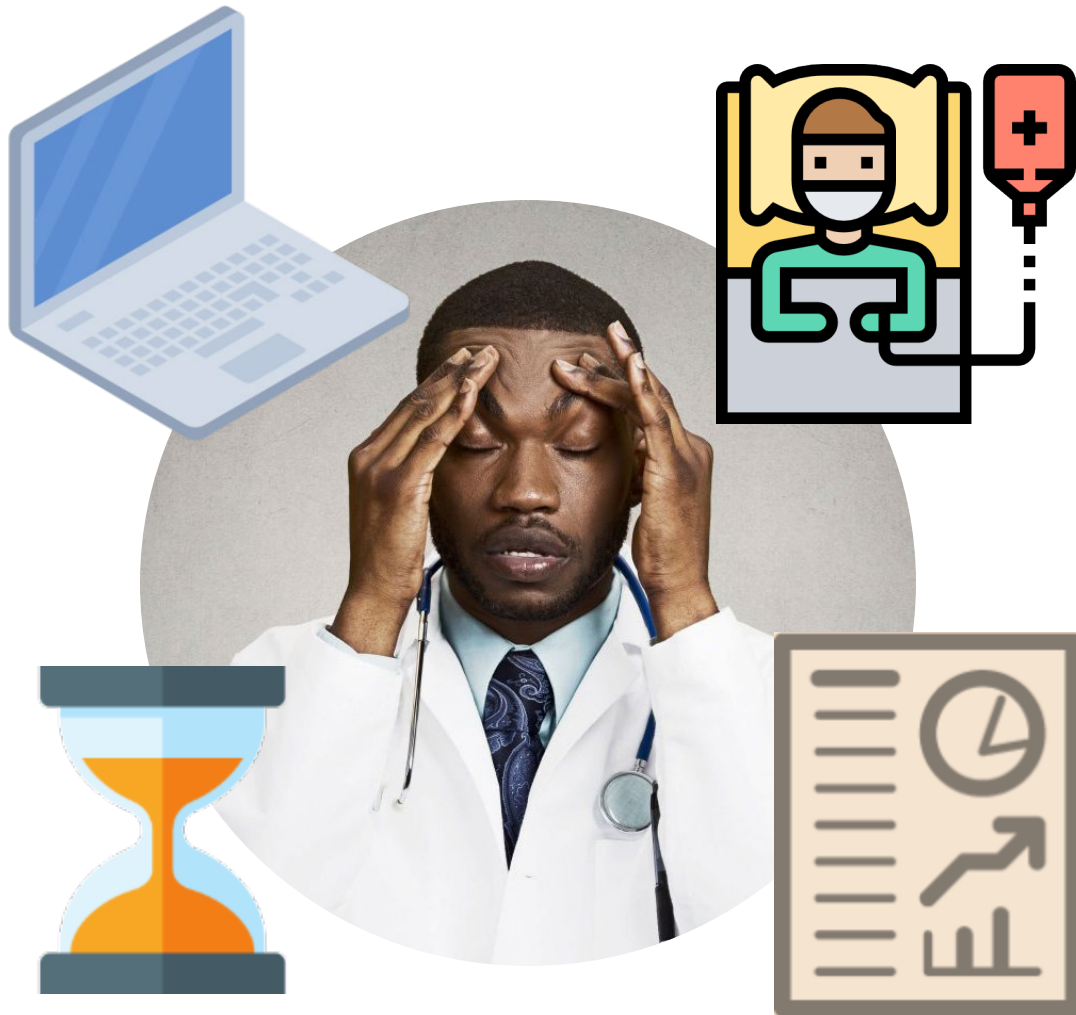
Base Your Comments on the Skills

1. Obtain a relevant history
2. Conduct a focused physical exam
3. Develop a prioritized differential diagnosis
4. Develop a diagnostic plan
5. Develop a treatment plan
6. Write effective notes
7. Provide an oral presentation



13.* Please comment on this student's overall performance. The comments may be included VERBATIM in the Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE). (Note: You must provide written comments if the 1st or 4th ratings are chosen).

How Can We Get Better?



What Do Quality Comments Look Like?

1. Observations of behaviors
 - Focus on actions, skills, behaviors that the student did or is able to do
 - Not personality traits or presumed intent
2. Specific
 - Give details about particular aspects of their performance
 - Not generic, “junk food” comments
3. Balanced
 - Include both things they did well and also ways they could improve, not just one or the other
4. Timely
 - As soon as possible after you work with the student



What Do Quality Comments Look Like?



1. Observations of behaviors



2. Specific



3. Balanced



4. Timely

High-quality feedback

Evaluations

Feedback



How To Make Comments Focused on Observations of Behaviors



1. Consider the skills expected of third-year students:

- History-taking
- Physical exam
- Differential diagnosis
- Diagnostic plan
- Treatment plan
- Writing notes
- Oral presentation

Which of these skills could I comment on?

What are some skills that they did well?

What are some skills that they have an opportunity to improve?

How To Make Comments Focused on Observations of Behaviors



2. Consider the different competency domains:

- Patient care
- Medical knowledge
- Interpersonal & communication skills
- Systems-based practice
- Practiced-based learning & improvement
- Professionalism

Which of these areas could I comment on?

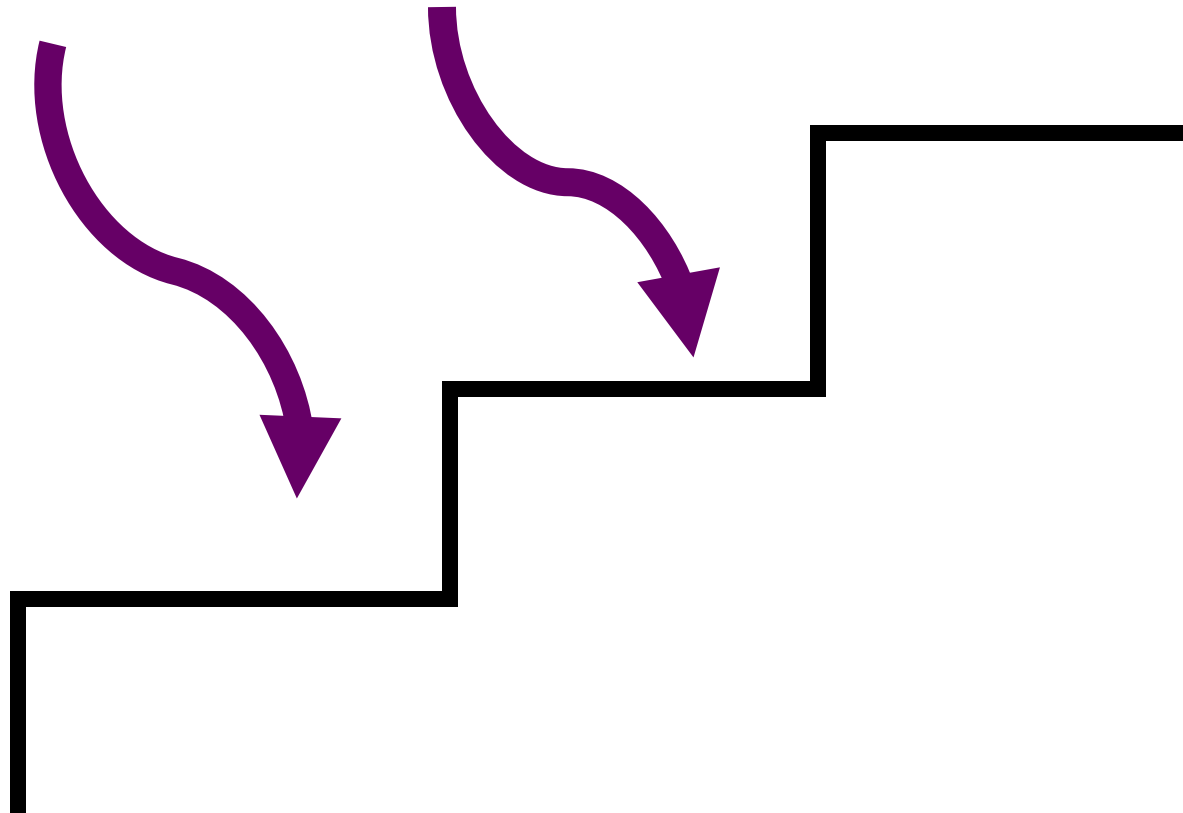
Which one stands out as a particular strength?

Are there any that need increased attention?

How To Make Comments More Specific



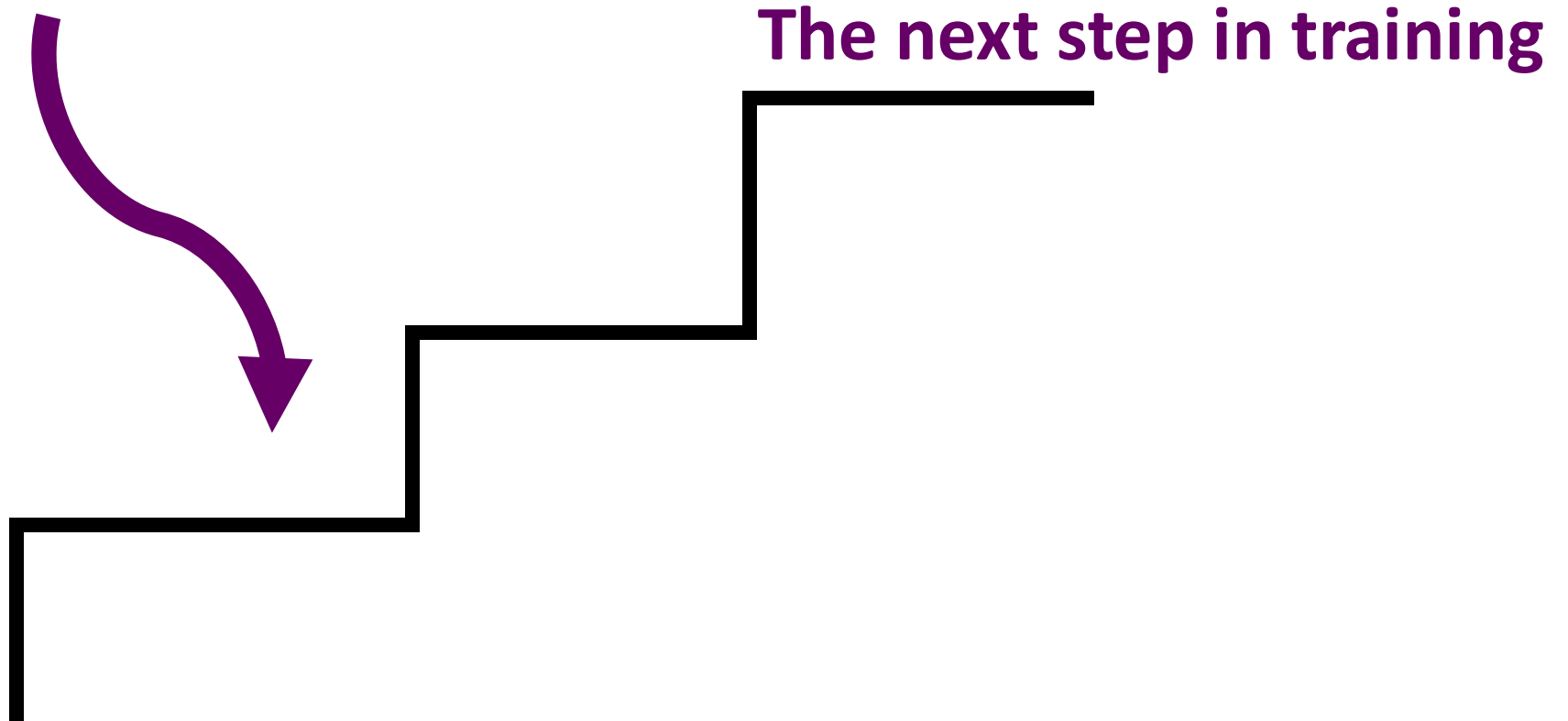
Describe where the student is on a continuum



How To Make Comments More Specific



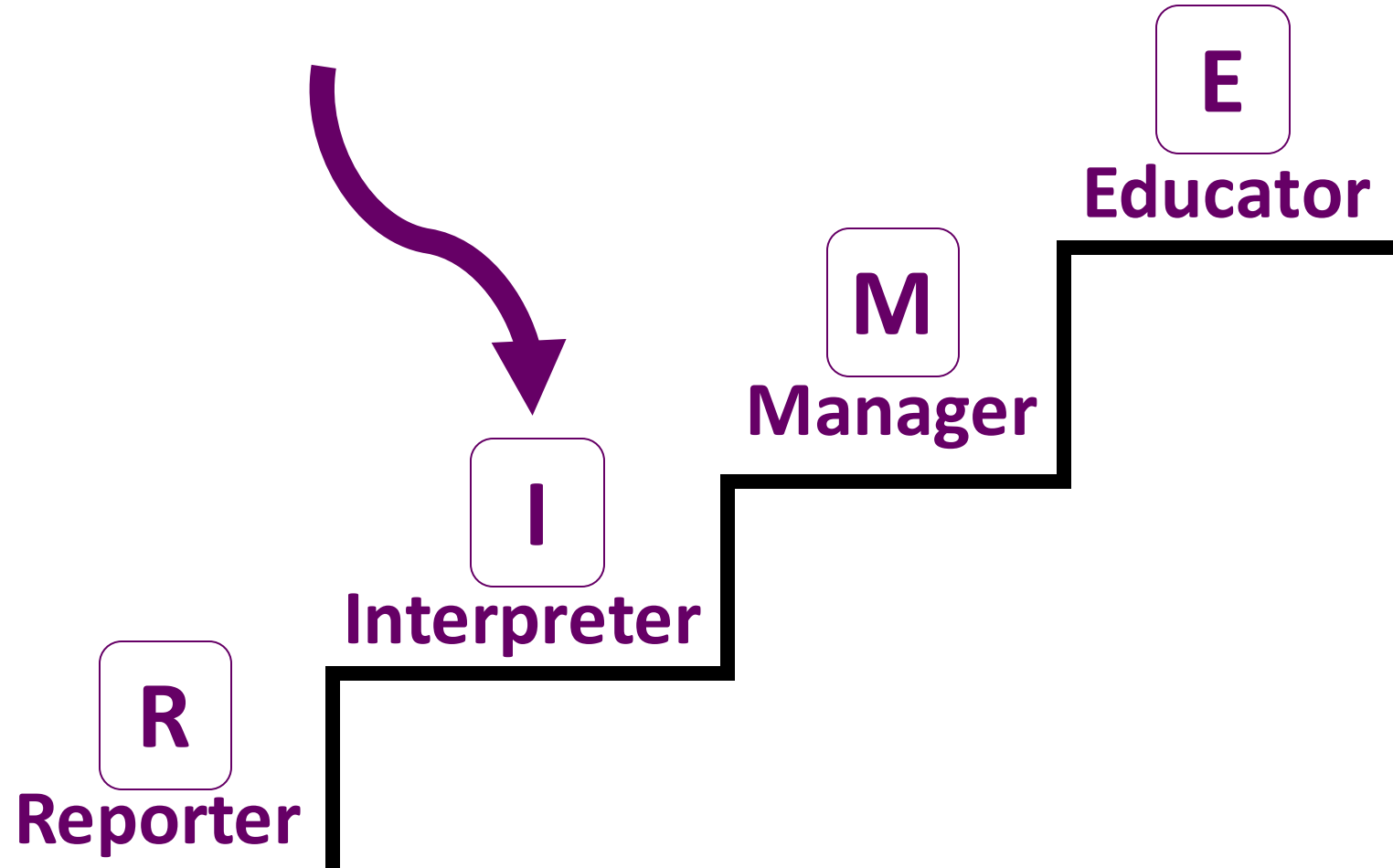
Describe where the student is on a continuum



How To Make Comments More Specific



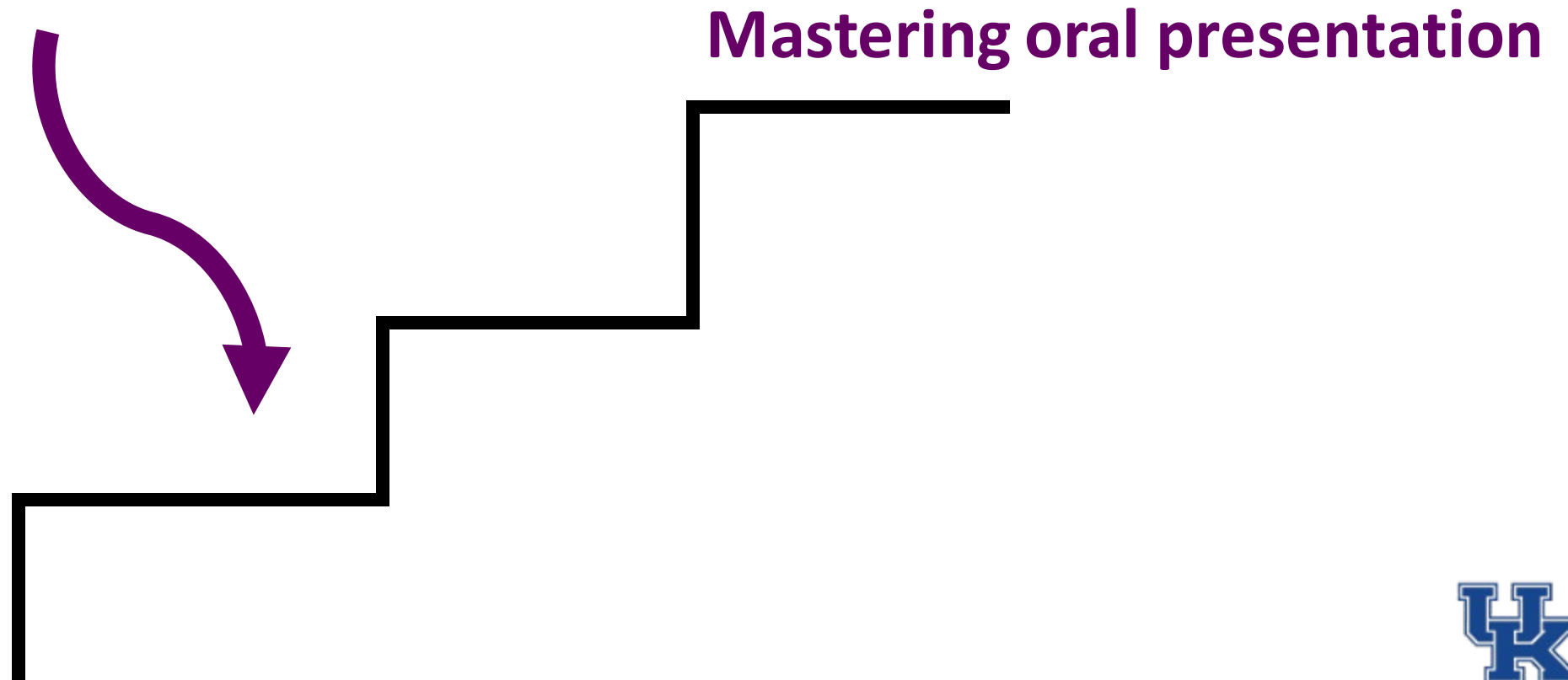
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How To Make Comments More Specific



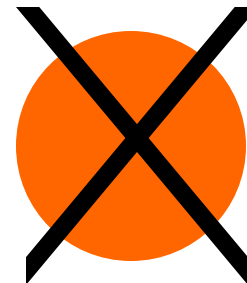
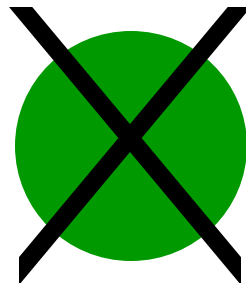
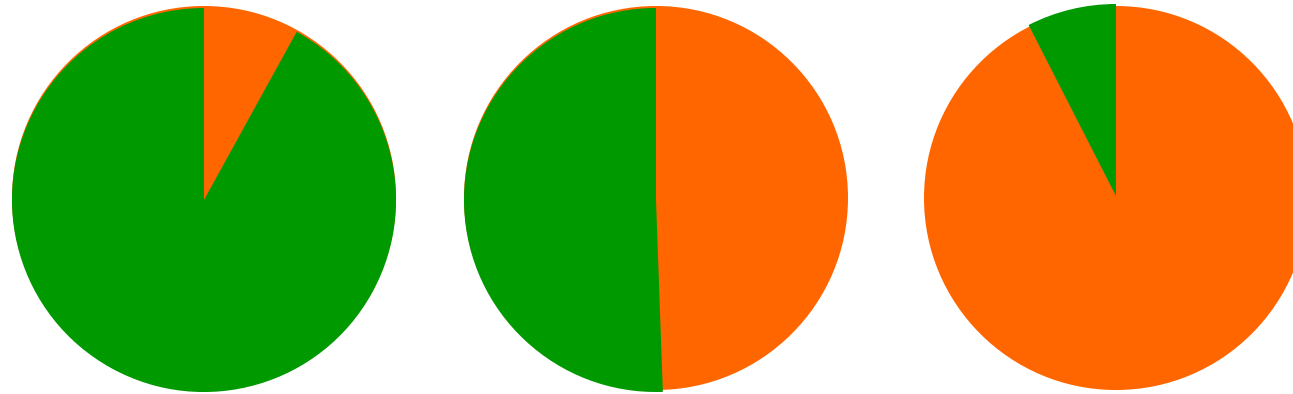
Describe where the student is on a continuum



How To Make Comments Balanced



Always include at least one thing the student did well and at least one thing the student could improve upon.

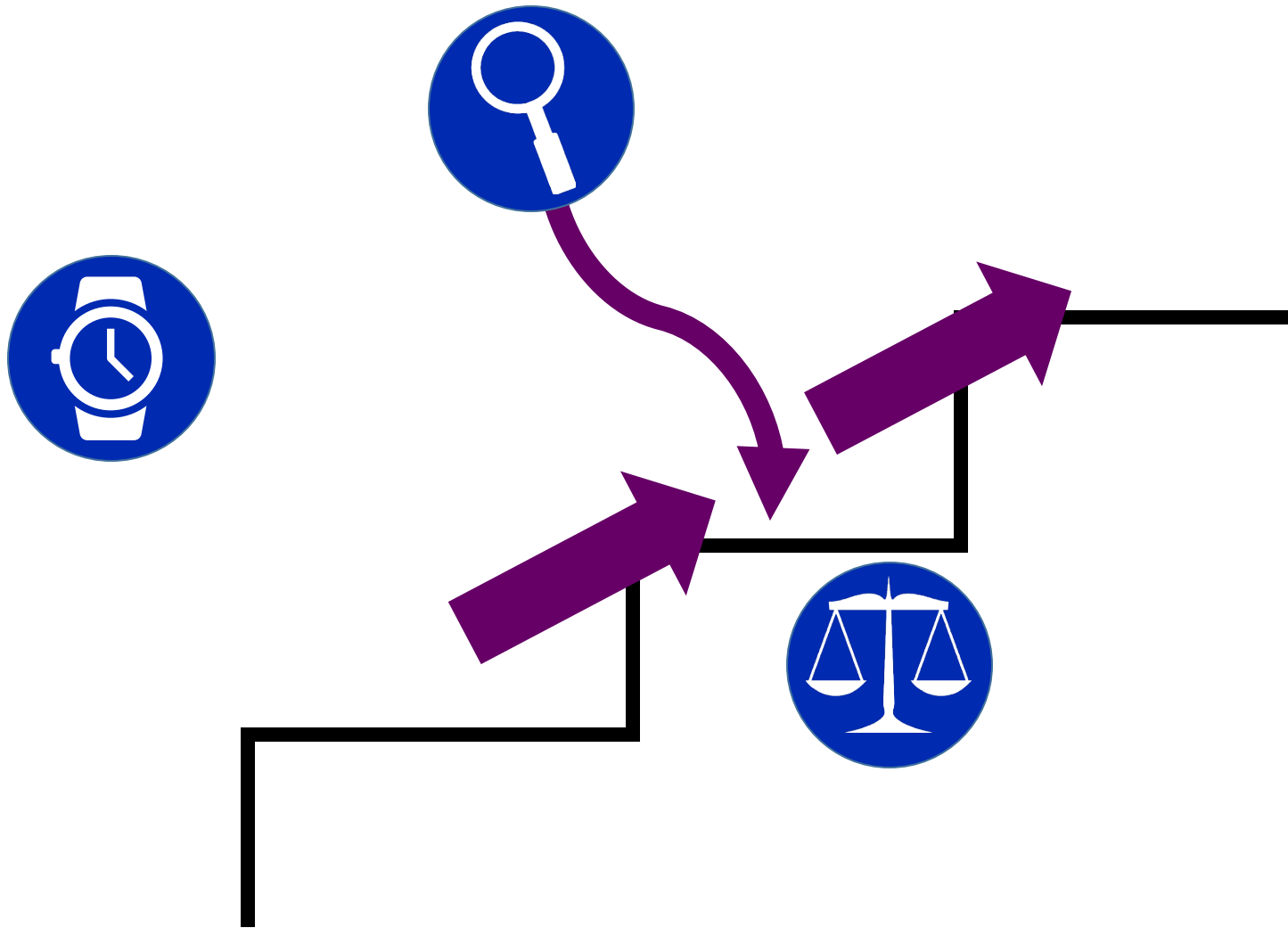


How to Make Comments Timely



- The entire clerkship grading has to be completed within 4 weeks after a student finished
- Students need comments much sooner than this to grow
- The sooner you complete the evaluation:
 - The more accurate it will be
 - The more useful it will be

Putting It Together

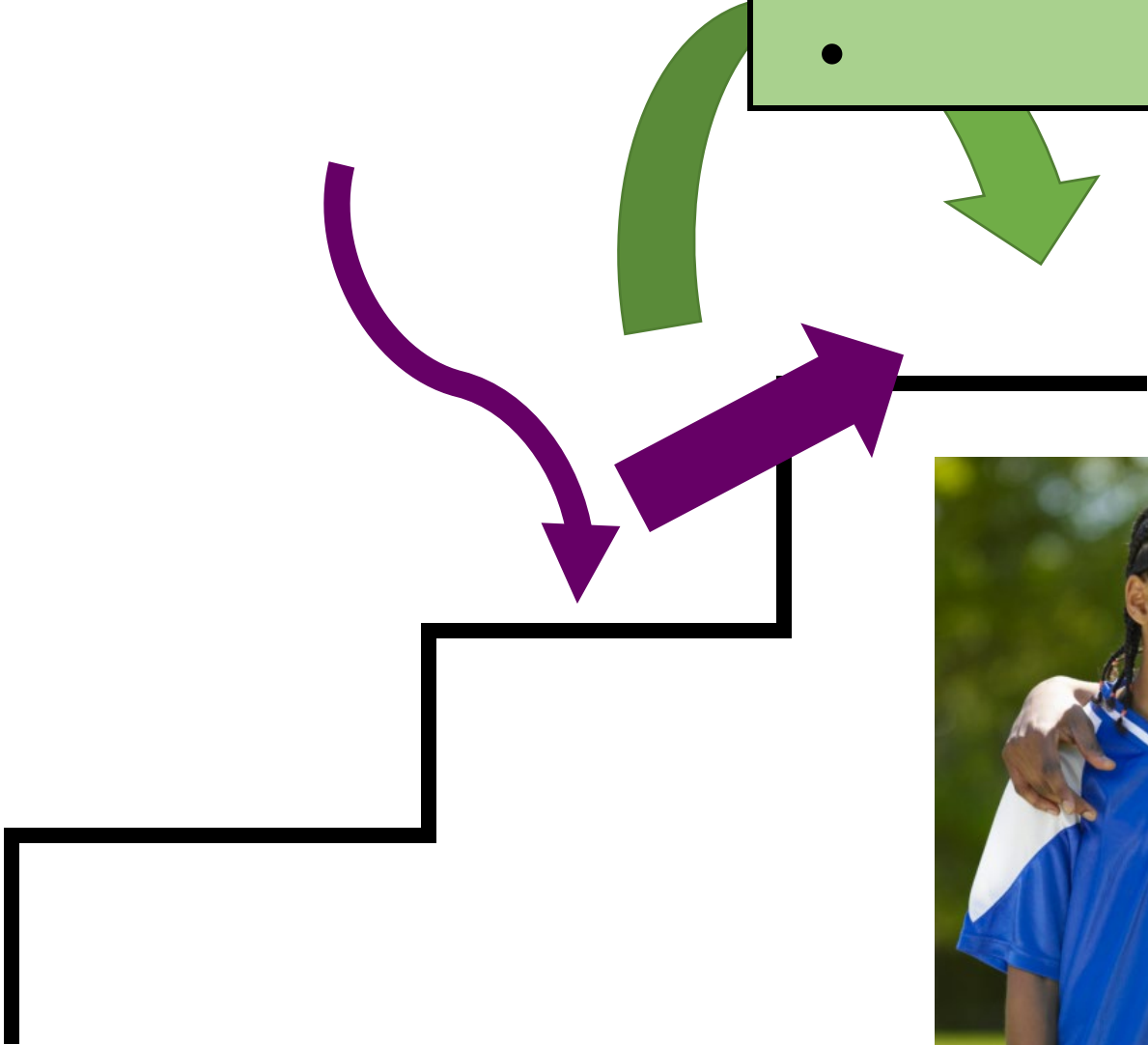


- History-taking
- Physical exam
- Differential diagnosis
- Diagnostic plan
- Treatment plan
- Writing notes
- Oral presentation

The Next Level

Try This:

-
-





LOVE IT OR LI\$T IT



Love It or List It?



1. He is performing well and has embraced rural culture well. Like all students he needs more patient interaction to hone skills.
2. Presentations were succinct and appropriate. Communicated and built rapport with patients. Did well discussing/teaching diet and exercise skills with patients. Took extra time to teach them which was excellent for pt. Work on expanding differential - don't form an idea too soon and allow for all options to be explored.
3. Very active in his desire to learn and advance his skill set. A pleasure to work with and talk with. He is well rounded and has good interpersonal skills. I really have no negatives to report. He is doing great for his stage of training.

Love It or List It?



4. Excellent student. Surpasses expectations for first clinical rotation. Will make an outstanding physician in whatever she chooses. Increased confidence will come with experience. Can improve cardiovascular exam (murmurs) and dermatology exam
5. She is performing satisfactorily. She confidently presents patients' cases and possesses adequate medical knowledge for her level of training. She exhibits great compassion when communicating with her patients. We had a discussion about the importance of expanding her differential diagnosis during case presentations to further enhance her skills
6. Very impressive for an early 3rd year student. She will do well going forward. She still has a ways to go in regards to her differential, but I am confident she will achieve this quickly.

What Makes This Challenging?

“I just feel like I don’t have much to say”



How Can You Increase the Data You Gather?

1. Pay attention to those critical skills:

- History-taking
- Physical exam
- Differential diagnosis
- Diagnostic plan
- Treatment plan
- Writing notes
- Oral presentation



How Can You Increase the Data You Gather?

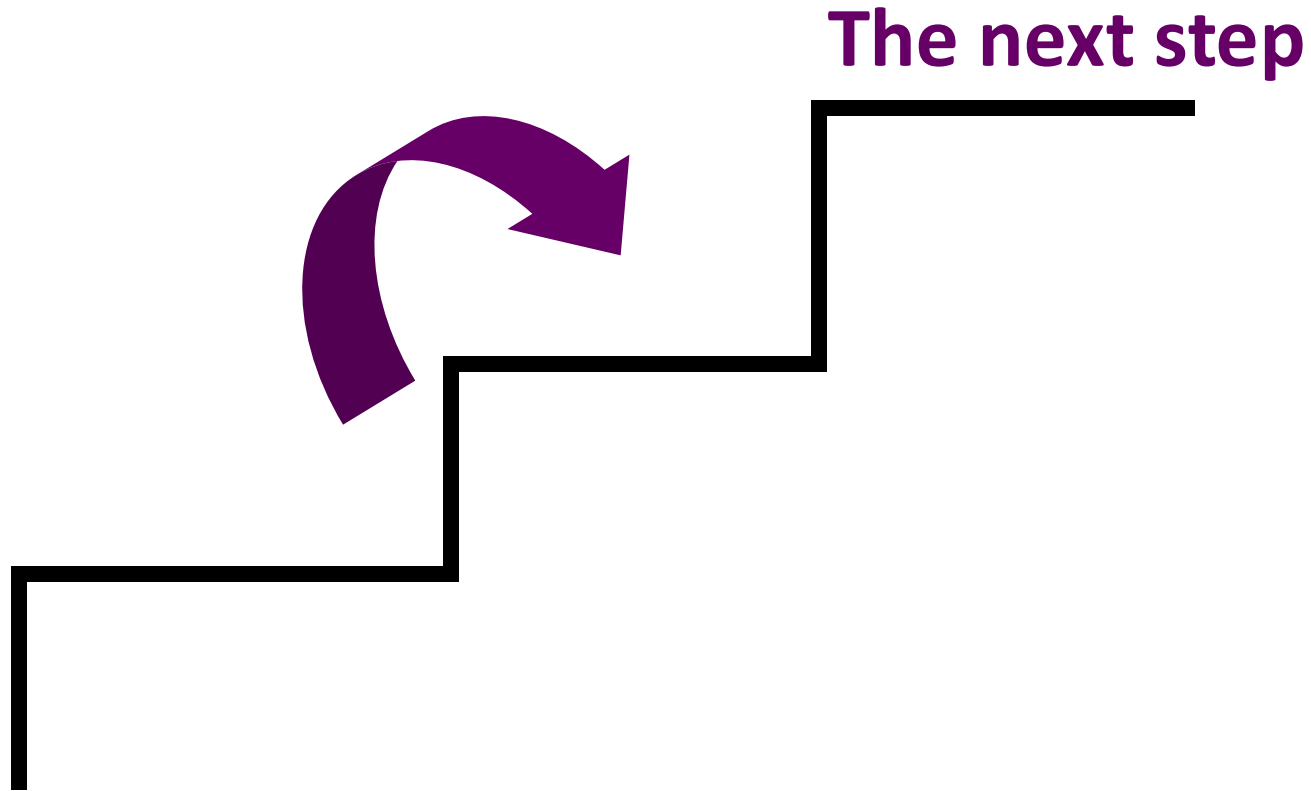
2. Take notes

- Notes app on your phone
- Email to yourself
- Note card
- Oasis evaluation (as incomplete)

Just jotting down a quick phrase each day, can really add up!



“This student’s really good. I don’t know what to tell them to work on.”

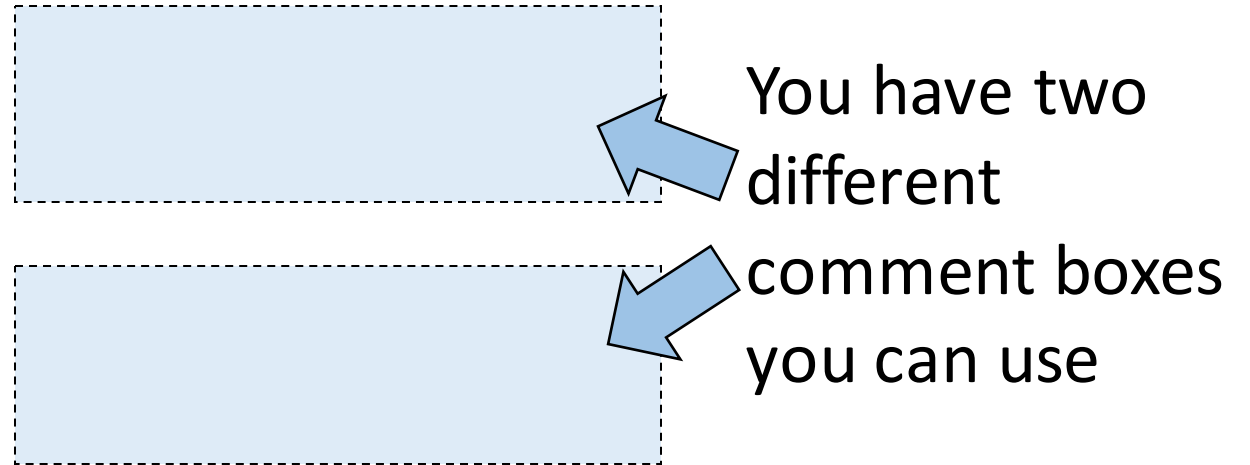
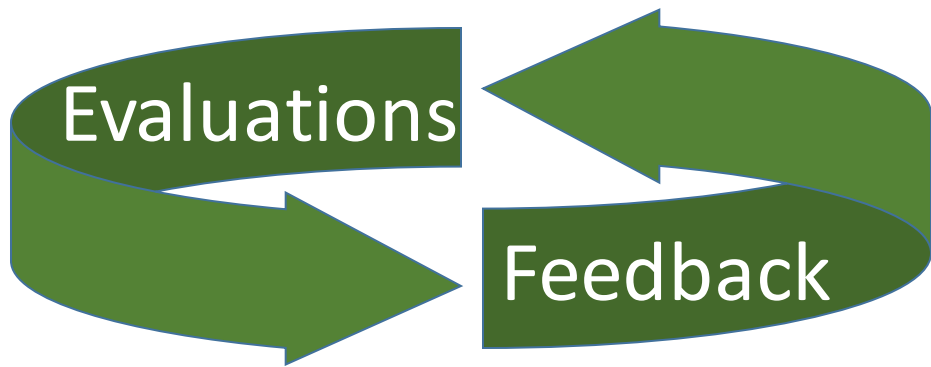


How to Write Comments for Great Students

- Describe the next step for them
 - If they're a great third-year, what could they start doing at the fourth-year level?
 - If they're a great fourth-year, what could they start doing at the resident level?
- Describe what made them really good
 - Talk about specific skills
 - Give examples



“This student’s struggled a lot, but I don’t want to crush them.”



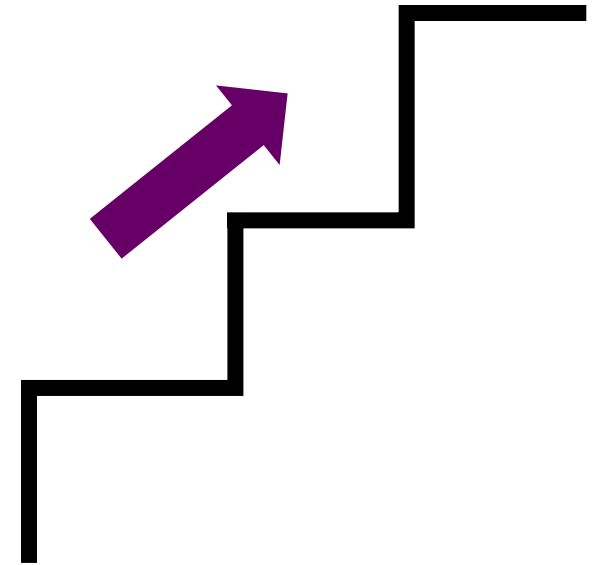
How to Write Comments for Struggling Students

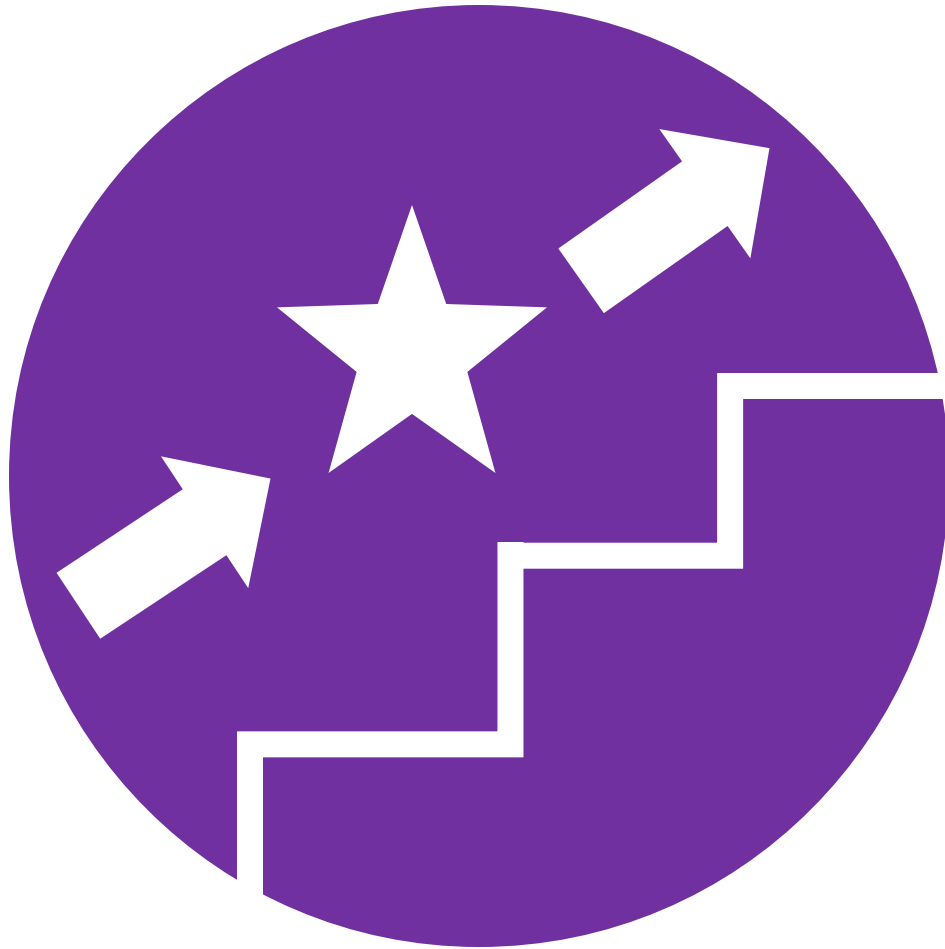
- Focus on actions and observations, not on the person
- Guide them to the skill(s) *most important* for them to work on
- What was one thing they did well?
 - There's always something:
 - Data collection
 - Asking questions



12 Phrases to Use with a Struggling Student

1. I recommend/suggest he work on...
2. The next step/challenge for her is to...
3. I'm excited to see how he might start to...
4. She is beginning to...
5. I encouraged him to start doing...
6. What I'd like to see next is...
7. He can continue to make progress by...
8. She has already begun to improve in her ability to...
9. I look forward to seeing his continued progress in...
10. For continued growth...
11. I expect he will continue to improve in...
12. To continue to build on her progress, she should...





All students,

No matter how much
they excel or how much
they struggle,

**Have something they
do well and some way
they can improve**