

Best Practices in Physician Communication: Self-Scoring Profile

Best Practices in Physician Communication: My Profile	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
<i>For each item, if you do this consistently, if your answer is "YES, I regularly do this," then put a check ✓ where you see the small box in the columns on the right.</i>							
1. I acknowledge my patient's feelings in an empathetic way.				<input type="checkbox"/>			
2. I take a deep breath and focus before approaching my patient.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
3. I greet my patients warmly and establish positive rapport immediately.			<input type="checkbox"/>				
4. When family members are present, I try to gain more insight about the patient from them.						<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. When I have an issue with a colleague's actions, I address it directly with that person.		<input type="checkbox"/>					
6. I validate or confirm the legitimacy of the patients' feelings.				<input type="checkbox"/>			
7. If I have an issue with a coworker, I raise the issue in a caring way.							<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Before I sit down with a patient, I prepare, so I can immediately show my knowledge of the patient.			<input type="checkbox"/>				
9. When I'm visiting with a patient, I sit, lean in and adopt an open, receptive posture.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
10. In hard conversations, I communicate empathy for the other person's feelings.							<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I work together with the patient to set priorities for the time we have together.						<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. I encourage patients to share their feelings.				<input type="checkbox"/>			
13. When the patient is speaking to me, I pay undivided attention, instead of shuffling papers, typing, taking notes, or looking at the computer.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
14. I ask the patient how much they want to know and honor their preference.					<input type="checkbox"/>		
15. I open my mind to ideas and opinions from others on the care team even when they disagree with mine.		<input type="checkbox"/>					
16. If a colleague has an issue with me, I listen and consider their point of view without being defensive.							<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I avoid using acronyms and jargon, so patients can easily understand me.					<input type="checkbox"/>		

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18. I encourage the patient to speak freely about their concerns before I intervene.			<input type="checkbox"/>				
19. I invite the patient's ideas and viewpoints before making suggestions.						<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. I act as a positive role model for collaboration and teamwork.		<input type="checkbox"/>					
21. I encourage questions as I proceed with an explanation.					<input type="checkbox"/>		
22. I show empathy in my nonverbal behavior, by nodding, looking concerned, and the like.				<input type="checkbox"/>			
23. I find out what people have understood, instead of taking for granted that they've understood me.					<input type="checkbox"/>		
24. I make a concerted effort to engage the patient in decisions.						<input type="checkbox"/>	
25. I check the patient's (and family member's) understanding and comfort with next steps before ending the visit.			<input type="checkbox"/>				
26. When I have bad news to share with a patient, I plan my approach so I'm more likely to handle it well.							<input type="checkbox"/>
27. When I'm with a patient, I am able to stop my mind from racing and really tune in to what the patient is saying.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
28. I acknowledge and appreciate coworkers who are involved in the patient's care.		<input type="checkbox"/>					
29. If family members are present, I show empathy for their feelings.				<input type="checkbox"/>			
30. I make the last six seconds of my interaction with a patient a positive memory for them.			<input type="checkbox"/>				
31. When family members are present, I invite their questions and address their concerns.						<input type="checkbox"/>	
32. In a hard conversation with a colleague, I listen with an open mind to the other person's point of view.							<input type="checkbox"/>
33. I find out from the patient what they already know, so I can build on this and address misinformation.					<input type="checkbox"/>		
34. I communicate well with coworkers about the patient's care, so we will be on the same page and not confuse the patient.		<input type="checkbox"/>					
35. When I'm with a patient, I make an effort to resist interruptions.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
TOTAL # of CHECKS IN EACH COLUMN							

How to Score Your Profile

Count: Count the number of checks you entered in the small boxes in each column and write the total below the column's letter in the TOTALS line at the bottom of the chart.

What do the columns mean? Your totals in each column represent the extent to which you regularly demonstrate best practices related to these key physician communication competencies:

Column	Competency Area	Your Score
A	Mindful Practice	
B	Collaboration and Teamwork	
C	Effective Openings and Closings	
D	Communicating with Empathy	
E	Effective Explanations	
F	Engaging Patients and Families as Partners	
G	Hard Conversations	

The checklist includes five items (best practices) associated with each of the seven competency areas and asks you to check off those that you employ regularly.

For each competency area, the lowest possible score is "0" meaning that you don't regularly employ any of the best practices for that competency area. The highest possible score is "5." A score of "5" indicates that you see yourself as employing all five best practices in that area of competency. The lower your score, the more opportunities you have for improvement.

Best Practices in Patient-Centered Communication: More about the Key Competencies

Grounded in extensive research on best communication practices for physicians, this book further defines and illustrates evidence-based practices related to each of the following seven competency areas.

