



UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

SLP & Audiology Supervision Workshop

Notes for Attendees – Sept 30, 2010

Scenario: The Marginal Extern (from Vicki McCready-adapted from McCrea & Brasseur, 2003).

Susan is an extern in an off-campus placement in an acute care rehabilitation setting and is due to graduate at the end of the term. Throughout the placement she has had a number of problems: her externship supervisor has observed that she is often late for appointments, fails to complete paperwork in a timely manner, and has difficulty relating to patients and their families.

The supervisor has given her constructive suggestions and over the past few weeks she has shown some improvement. The supervisor who has her own caseload and managerial responsibilities is beginning to worry that she will no longer have the time to give Susan the help she needs. At the same time, the supervisor is feeling some pressure to bring Susan's skills "up to par" because she graduates at the end of the term. The university externship coordinator agrees to meet with the externship supervisor and mentions on the phone that a less-than-satisfactory grade could create problems.

Notes from Discussion:

1. Root Cause: could be:
 - a. Personal issue
 - b. Substance abuse?
 - c. Poor history of supervision (inadequate?)
 - d. Unclear expectations
 - e. Learning disability? Aspergers?
 - f. Personality?
 - g. Mental health?
 - h. Boyfriend/Girlfriend problems?
2. Possible Solutions could be:
 - a. Ask her if there is anything in her life that is affecting her performance
 - b. Ask about preferred learning style; feedback style
 - c. Videotaping session
 - d. Data on issues (performance) and feedback
 - e. Clarifying her role in the setting
 - f. Meet with supervisor at university to determine what problems would result from failing; what is required for a "pass"
 - g. What other support can university give to increase skills ("conditional pass")
 - h. Clear goals and data and feedback to student (performance based)

Scenario: The Perfectionist Supervisee (from Vicki McCready)

Mary is an externship student with a lot of fears about clinical performance. Her academic record has been stellar, i.e. she entered graduate school with a 3.9 GPA. Her professors from both undergraduate and graduate courses have remarked how Mary would be quite upset if she received an A- and not an A on a paper or project. After getting the grade, she would immediately seek out the professor and ask what she had done wrong. Her on-campus clinical supervisors have felt very concerned about how she will be on her externship placements.

After very thorough planning, Mary has her first contact with a client at her externship site. Her off-campus supervisor participates with her and gives her both encouraging and constructive feedback. After the session, Mary comes to see the supervisor and appears very nervous and teary eyed. She wonders how she will ever make it in this field.

Notes from Discussion:

1. Planning together
2. There are other ways to do things
3. Her opportunity to learn from others
4. What kind of feedback does she want?
5. More sandwich
6. Isn't it great that you will always be learning and that you are at the beginning of the journey?
7. The supervisory experience is about me giving you more feedback even if you are a great student. I will have something to have you work on.

Scenario: Supervisors with different expectations (from Vicki McCready)

Sam has been an intern in an off-campus site for a month and he does not know what to do about the situation in which he finds himself. He thought he was prepared for his internship experience. He had done well academically and clinically in an on-campus practicum and approached his off-campus assignment with enthusiasm and a positive attitude. Having never worked in this setting or with this population, he knew he had a lot to learn and initially would require a lot of direct-active supervision.

His fieldwork supervisor, on the other hand, was expecting an intern who could move right into his clinical assignments. She knew that Sam had a strong academic and clinical record so far and she was pleased that the university was sending her such a strong student. She thought that she had clarified her site's expectations to the on-campus clinical coordinator. Much to her surprise and concern, Sam's skills and background knowledge were not at all what she expected.

Meanwhile, the on-campus coordinator was excited about Sam's placement and knew he would do a great job just as he had been doing on campus. She expected

the fieldwork supervisor to prepare Sam for the experience and “break him in” gradually. With these expectations in mind, she did not feel the need to call in Sam or to touch base with his fieldwork supervisor during this first month.

Notes from discussion:

Problem:

1. Unrealistic expectations of Sam’s abilities within new placement and population
2. Poor communication between On/off campus supervisors and Sam did not clearly communicate his strengths and areas where he needed support.

Solutions:

1. Off campus supervisor needs to talk about strengths or needs with Sam
2. Discuss concerns with Sam and adjust her expectations and goals
3. Call and chat with on campus supervisor to clarify her expectations, where he is in the program
4. Ask Sam where he needs support

Strategies:

1. Set out clear plan of expectations e.g. first two weeks Sam should be able to take data, or engage with a 2 year old
2. Maybe change levels of support back to more direct/active and then move into collaborative
3. Determine by asking Sam how he best prefers feedback e.g. written, direct after each session etc.
4. Predict that he may need more direct, specific task oriented feedback because of his strong academic background
5. Continue to check back in as needed

Scenario: Older supervisee, younger supervisor from different cultural backgrounds (from Vicki McCready)

June, age 30, is the supervisor for Athena, age 35. Athena, an African American mother with two children has returned to school to pursue another degree in a helping profession. Her children are in school during the day leaving Athena with time now to be in school again herself. Before having a family, Athena worked as a personnel manager at a nursing home. Enjoying older adults, she would like to specialize with this population.

June, on the other hand, is a single Caucasian adult without a lot of “real world” experience. Her area of clinical expertise and her research have involved young children. June went from her master’s degree to her doctoral studies without too much work outside the academic setting. Her research has been published in the premier journals of her national association. With a shortage of supervisors in her department, she has agreed to supervise Athena’s first clinical practicum.

As the two meet for the first time to plan for the clinical experience, it becomes apparent that there is not immediate rapport. June wonders how she will ever be able to supervise this woman and Athena wonders why in the world she was assigned to June!

Notes from Discussion:

1. Set clear expectations
2. Acknowledge the problem openly, both the supervisor and supervisee's uncomfortable feelings.
3. Assign a lot of reflective self-assessments
4. Supervisor reviews own caseload carefully
5. If student seems over-confident, gently ask them to apply their knowledge to the specific client and the treatment-turn them back to a learning task
6. Let supervisee set some of her own goals
7. Have a lot of planned meetings and check-ins
8. Carefully-worded feedback

Scenario: Student with undisclosed mental health issues (from Vicki McCready)

Pamela is a first-year graduate student who is completing her clinical practicum hours in the on-campus clinic. The supervisors have observed that her clinical performance is quite inconsistent. She often loses concentration in therapy, becomes disorganized with her clinical materials and appears fatigued. At other times she performs well within expectations for her level of experience. Pamela is incredibly thin, rarely eats anything other than fat-free yogurt, declines offerings of food at departmental social gatherings and maintains a strict regimen of exercise at the campus recreation center. She wears baggy pants and has hair that is noticeably thinning. The supervisor is understandably concerned about Pamela's health as well as her unpredictable performance in clinical practicum. Recently other students have spoken with the supervisor about their concerns for Pamela. The supervisor is unsure as to how to proceed, especially since the student has not disclosed any personal information to her.

Notes not submitted—however this group shared their discussion points during the workshop.

Scenario: The Outstanding Clinician (adapted from Dowling, 2001)

Don often requested the most difficult clients because he felt that the challenge increased his growth. His test selection was innovative and insightful, while his manner with his clients was delightful to observe. Don's sessions were always goal-oriented, well implemented, and creative. When a difficulty arose, he quickly gathered data to identify the source with input from the supervisor. Occasionally problems arose within a session, but Don was always able to engage in self-reflection after the session and identify what he would do differently next time. At

the mid-term conference, he could identify both his areas of strength and those he wanted to improve. The supervisor was very pleased with his growth. The supervisor wanted to ensure that this experience is rich enough for Don. She worried that he would “wither on the vine” if he did not have ample enough opportunity to continue to enhance his above average clinical skills.

*Since this scenario is challenging in a different manner than the other scenarios, your group gets its own set of questions!

Notes from discussion:

1. What is the challenge here?
 - a. Feeling like he’s getting enough out of the experience.
 - b. Making sure his clinical experience is fulfilling.
 - c. Being able to advance along the continuum.
2. What are the supervisor’s responsibilities for Don’s learning?
 - a. Providing opportunities to have challenging clients
 - b. Having a variety of clients and clients that will challenge his learning
 - c. Giving additional resources
3. What could be some pitfalls when supervising an exceptional student?
 - a. Feeling inadequate
 - b. Not giving too much freedom and moving too quickly along the continuum
 - c. Making sure he doesn’t get too confident
4. Where on the continuum of supervision would Don fall?
 - a. Towards end of collaborative
5. How can the supervisor move him up the continuum?
 - a. Fading feedback
 - b. Giving more responsibility