# Generic Communication Checklist

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<th>Comments:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student established rapport with me by listening attentively</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Student showed genuine interest in me by being concerned and respectful</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Student asked or commented on how this health issue is affecting my life</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Student explained clearly (without medical jargon) what is happening with me medically</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Student explained clearly (without medical jargon) what the next steps would be</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Student provided information and content that was appropriate for me</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Student asked specific questions to confirm my understanding of the findings</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Student assessed my ability and/or willingness to carry out the next steps</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Student demonstrated an understanding of the reason for my visit and any concerns I had</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Student used statements of understanding and support to acknowledge my emotions</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>E</td>
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</table>
Generic Communication Checklist

GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE CHECKLIST

Your job is to evaluate the student's communication skills during their encounter with you. For the following items on the checklist you will mark one (and only one) of the following:
1. Mark “Y” if the student accomplished the item in question
2. Mark “N” if the student did not accomplish the item in question
3. Mark “E” if the student did an “EXCELLENT” job with the item in question

Please do not mark “E” unless a student is truly exceptional and you cannot imagine how they could possibly meet the objective any better than they did. The “excellent” category is reserved for student performances that are above and beyond average.

1. Student established rapport with me by listening attentively:

Attentive listening skills include the following:
- Maintaining eye contact
- Open body posture (leaning toward you, arms not crossed)
- Nodding and/or verbally acknowledging your responses
  - This can be as simple as saying “I see...” or “um-hum” or “alright”
  - This can be more specific, such as saying “tell me more about that” or asking you for clarification regarding what you have said.
- NOT asking the same questions twice (unless they are obviously seeking clarification)
- Pausing between questions and after your answer
- Repeating back to you what you said

SCORING:

“N” = Student does a poor job of listening attentively, and you feel it had a negative effect on the rapport that was established between you and the student.
“Y” = Student displays most of the skills listed above and you feel they listened attentively.
“E” = Student used ALL the skills/behaviors listed above the ENTIRE time they were with you.

2. Student showed genuine interest in me by being concerned and respectful:

Concern and respect should be evident in the student's attitude, their voice, and in what they say to you. Examples of concern and respect include but are not limited to:
- Empathic statements regarding your situation
- Student may use your first name after introducing themselves to make the visit more personal, or they may address you formally as Mr./Ms.
• Generally, it should “seem” as though the student really cares about you and your situation; it should NOT seem like the student is just in the room to take a test

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student does not seem genuinely interested in you as a patient and does not seem to be taking the encounter seriously.
“Y” = Student displays some concern and is respectful during the encounter.
“E” = Student seemed genuinely interested and seemed to genuinely care about you and your situation the ENTIRE time they were with you.

3. **Student asked or commented on how this health issue is affecting my life:**

This requires that the student attempts to find out where this health issue is affecting you in your daily routine. Some health issues interfere greatly with everyday activities. The student would get credit for EITHER asking you about these symptoms OR acknowledging them.

• Students could acknowledge these with a simple statement such as: “It sounds like these symptoms are really messing up your usual routine” OR the student may acknowledge individual symptoms.

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student does not identify or comment on how your symptoms are affecting your life
“Y” = Student identifies or comments on AT LEAST one way your symptoms are disrupting your daily routine, sleep, etc.
“E” = Student identifies AND/OR comments on ALL of the above ways your symptoms are affecting your life.

4. **Student explained clearly (without medical jargon) what is happening with me medically:**

This involves the student telling you what is happening without using a lot of medical terminology (NOTE: It is acceptable if the student uses a medical term followed by an explanation or definition.)

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student does not explain what is happening, or does so with excessive medical jargon.
“Y” = Student explains clearly what is happening without using excessive medical jargon.
“E” = Student does an EXCEPTIONAL job explaining what is happening with you without using medical jargon, or clearly explaining medical jargon.
5. **Student explained clearly (without medical jargon) what the next steps would be:**

This involves the student telling you what is going to happen next without a lot of medical terminology. It usually involves further diagnostic testing, labs, or procedures to address the problem. It is not necessary for the student to be RIGHT about what comes next – only that they tell you their plan of care in a manner that you understand. (NOTE: It is acceptable if the student uses a medical term followed by an explanation or definition.)

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student does not explain the treatment plan or does so with excessive medical jargon.

“Y” = Student explains the next steps that will be taken in your plan of care in a manner that is clear and easy to understand without medical jargon REGARDLESS of what that plan is.

“E” = Student does an EXCEPTIONAL job explaining what the plan is.

6. **Student provided information and content that was appropriate for me:**

This involves the student providing the right amount of content and the appropriate kind of content that fits with your patient role and the situation. You will have to determine if the information you got from the student was sufficient, or if it was lacking or overwhelming. If it was sufficient, give the student credit. If it is lacking or overwhelming, the student would not get credit for this item.

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student fails to provide you with appropriate information.

“Y” = Student provides you sufficient information and content in regards to your complaint

“E” = Student provides you EXCEPTIONAL information and content in regards to your complaint and does not provide to little or too much information.

7. **Student asked specific questions to confirm my understanding of the findings:**

This involves the student asking you to tell them what you understand in your own words or by repeating what they have told you. NOTE: It is not enough for the student to ask if you understand; they must find out WHAT you understand and get you to tell them.

- This is important because many patients believe that they understand when they really don’t, or they say that they understand when it is still unclear. These miscommunications lead to problems later.

- A student who asks you to explain to them in your own words what is happening to you has accomplished this checklist item. There are a few different ways students might approach this:
They might ask you outright what you think is happening to you.
They may ask “If you were describing your condition to someone else, what
would you say?”
They could say something like: “I want to make sure that I have done a good job
of explaining everything to you today. Can you give me a summary of what is
happening and what the plan is in your own words?”
The student might ask you if you understand, and when you say that you do,
follow up with “Tell me in your own words what you understand.”
The student may also ask you specific questions regarding the plan, to ensure
that you understood what they told you, such as:
- “How often will you check your blood sugar?”
- “How often are you going use the insulin?”

If a student asks you to tell them what you understand, you will explain to them what
you understand based on THAT STUDENT’S EXPLANATION. If the student was vague or
unclear, you will give a vague and unclear answer. If the student was clear and concise,
you will repeat back what they told you. Essentially, you will tell the student what you
understand. At this point, the student may explain again if your understanding is vague
or incorrect, or he/she will confirm that you understand what was said. If the student
re-explains, they should have you tell them AGAIN what you understand. See below for
scoring.

**IMPORTANT**: If a student simply asks you if you understand, you will say “yes” and you
will NOT elaborate. The student must ask SPECIFIC questions about what you
understand to get credit for this item.

**SCORING:**

“N” = Student does not ask you to tell him/her what you understand or simply asks you if you
understand.
“Y” = Student gets you to tell them WHAT you understand.
“E” = Student explains to you that it is important for him/her to know WHAT you understand to
prevent misunderstandings later and does this in a professional manner that flows smoothly
and does not seem awkward or condescending. If the student has to explain again, they
repeated the process to get you to explain what you understood after they clarified.

8. **Student assessed my ability and/or willingness to carry out the next steps:**

This involves the student finding out if you are able to follow their plan of care and/or if you are
willing to follow their plan of care. Notice that students get credit for doing EITHER of these.

- In this case, your ability to treat your symptoms is not in question as much as your
  willingness to move forward with the doctor’s plan. Since you have the right to refuse
  health care, it is important for the student to confirm that you are willing to take the
  next steps.
SCORING:

“N” = Student does not assess your ability to do what is needed and does not ask your permission to proceed with their plan.
“Y” = Student assesses your ability AND/OR asks your permission to proceed with the plan they have described.
“E” = Student determines your ability and/or willingness to comply with EVERY ASPECT of their plan of care.

9. Student demonstrated an understanding of the reason for my visit and any concerns I had:

The reason for your visit is pretty obvious in this case. For students to get credit on this item it is important that they find out if you have any other concerns besides your original complaint. The student may ask you if you have any other questions or concerns.

SCORING:

“N” = Student does not identify whether or not you have additional concerns.
“Y” = Student asks you if you have additional concerns, or elicits the information above and ACKNOWLEDGES that you are concerned about it.
“E” = Student does an EXEMPLARY job of identifying your concern and makes an effort to encourage you or help you feel like you have a health care team to back you and assist you in the change.

10. Student used statements of understanding and support to acknowledge my emotions:

This is accomplished when the student verbalizes empathy. Students will get credit for this item if they verbally acknowledge your emotions and say something to comfort you.

SCORING:

“N” = Student does not use verbal statements of understanding and support of your emotions.
“Y” = Student verbally supports your emotions.
“E” = Student is OUTSTANDING in their support of you emotionally and takes every opportunity to express empathy for your situation.
"The **CIS subcomponent** includes assessment of the patient-centered communication skills of fostering the relationship, gathering information, providing information, helping the patient make decisions, and supporting emotions. CIS performance is assessed by the standardized patients, who record these skills using a checklist based on observable behaviors.

Examinees demonstrate the ability to **foster the relationship by listening attentively** by showing interest in the patient as a person, and by **demonstrating genuineness, caring, concern, and respect**.

Examinees demonstrate skills in gathering information by using open-ended techniques that encourage the patient to explain the situation in his/her own words and in a manner relevant to the situation at hand, and by **developing an understanding of the expectations and priorities of the patient** and/or **how the health issue has affected the patient**.

Examinees demonstrate skills in **providing information by using terms the patient can understand** and by providing reasons that the patient can accept. These **statements need to be clear and understandable and the words need to be those in common usage**. The amount of information provided needs to be matched to the patient's need, preference, and ability. The patient should be encouraged to develop and demonstrate a full and accurate understanding of key messages.

Examinees demonstrate helping the patient make decisions by outlining what should happen next, linked to a rationale, and by assessing a patient's level of agreement, **willingness, and ability to carry out next steps**.

Examinees demonstrate the ability to support emotions when a clinical situation warrants it by seeking clarification or elaboration of the patient's feelings and by **using statements of understanding and support**.