

How to Pass The CSA – Top Tips

In the first 6 minutes:

Focused History Taking

- Open question firstly – ‘What can I do for you?’
- Acknowledge the presenting complaint – show self awareness! Imagine you are talking to a friend or relative. Show sincerity and sensitivity.
- Screen for red flags and ask for associated symptoms
- REMEMBER YOUR BASIC HX TAKING SKILLS!
- Ask about impact on daily living if appropriate

Eliciting and Acknowledging health beliefs

- Acknowledge and Follow up cues : verbal / non -verbal
 - Ask sensitively
- ‘Had you any idea /thoughts yourself as to why this might have happened?’

Summarise

- Before you examine : SUMMARISE to check you have not missed anything

Appropriate Use of Medical Instruments and Examination techniques

- Verbalise what you would like to do
- If the examiner does not intervene – get on and do it!
- Be gentle, show fluency and structure in your examination (EYES, ENT, JOINTS)

In the remaining 4 minutes:

Informed Decision Making

- Share your findings
- Readdress health beliefs and reassure when appropriate
- Propose a working diagnosis in user friendly language
- Work on the probability of what is likely to be happening
- Consider how the problem might develop
- Address concerns sensitively and sensibly

Clinical Rx

- Share sensible patient centred (in the best interests of the patient) management options
- Justify Rx Plans – evidence base, act appropriately when presented with red flags
- Health promotion when appropriate e.g. the smoker with a chronic cough – but do not make it a tutorial
- Manage uncertainty with confidence - Safety net!
- Reassure as necessary

Remember at all times to try to remain:

Interpersonal Skills: CALM / COLLECTED / MAINTAIN RAPPORT

LOOK FOR AN OPENING INTO THE CONSULTATION

- This almost always depends upon picking up the patient’s agenda
- To do this you must :

ACKNOWLEDGE / BE SINCERE / SENSITIVE / RETAIN STRUCTURE /

RX UNCERTAINTY CONFIDENTLY