

How to Pass The CSA – Mentor Top Tips

In the first 6 minutes:

Focused History Taking

- Open question firstly – ‘What can I do for you?’
- ‘Could you tell me how it all started?’
- Acknowledge the presenting complaint – show self awareness! Imagine you are talking to a friend or relative. Show sincerity and sensitivity.
- FOCUSED AND SPECIFIC QUESTIONS – SCREEN FOR RED FLAGS
- SIGNPOSTING OF QUESTIONS AS APPROPRIATE
- RELEVANT PSYCHOSOCIAL HISTORY – How is this affecting the patient? At work / home?
- Smoking / Alcohol only in context

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 that you have covered RED FLAGS / RELEVANT PSYCHOSOCIAL HISTORY / ELICITED AND ACKNOWLEDGED HEALTH BELIEF

Appropriate Use of Medical Instruments and Examination techniques

- Verbalise what you would like to do – FOCUSED EXAMINATION
- 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
- COMMIT : consider is this serious / is this not serious?
- 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 – Follow up and Safety net!
- Be supportive – display POSITIVE ENERGY!

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How to Pass - REMEMBER THE S's

•Smile 😊

•Self Awareness = Sensitivity + Sincerity

(Imagine how you would feel if you were in the patient's shoes?)

•Sympathy

•Structure to your Hx taking and Clinical Rx

•Specific in line of questioning

•Signposting

•Share your findings and thoughts

•Summarise to check your / pt understanding

•Safety Net

•Simple Explanations

• Support the patient all the way

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