

Thoughts on Training

Andrew O'Shaughnessy

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1. The 'prime objective' is to pass the exams and complete the portfolio – trainers recognize this, but: - When you finish your training and get your first Consultant post, you will need more than what the exams and portfolio provide – one of the key roles of your trainer and training location is to provide you with these 'other' skills and experiences.
2. It is part of Public Health lore that the first two years of Consultant life are difficult and that the adjustment from SpT to Consultant is troublesome. I think this is unnecessary (beyond the inevitable stresses that come with moving up the ladder in any sphere of work) and that a good 'training experience' can mitigate against this.
3. As you progress through training, you should gradually start to move towards acting as an *independent* Consultant, under the supervision of your trainers. Ideally, at the end of your training you should be performing the roles and tasks that a Consultant does as part of your day job, not building up your skills to prepare for a first 'unleashing' on day one of your first Consultant job.
4. There are broadly three stages of training:

Pre-part A

You are new to the role and for most people the fact that you are 'supernumerary' and your objectives are focused on training rather than service delivery per se, will be a new experience.

- Ask questions. Ask a question if you don't know. This is *crucial*, no-one is going to think any the worse of you. Be a sponge, ask about the work environment, the new people you meet, names that crop up on your papers all the time – who are these people? What do they do? What does it mean for me? What does it mean for the DPH?..... Ask about the system – how does Finance work? What about the PAs? Who is important at the Local Authority? What do they actually do?
- Ask questions relating to the Part A. It is quite ok to discuss technical issues in the work environment – ask about stats and epidemiology, ask where technical skills are used and what they look like in action rather than in the classroom. A key aspect to passing Part A is understanding how your skills are applied *in practice*

- Don't be afraid to volunteer for work. We are always impressed when you identify something that interests you and have an idea about how you can contribute and learn. Remember you are highly capable and important to us
- Use your 1:1s to discuss Part A issues along with everything else.

Post-Part A, Pre-Part B

- Well done, it's a tough exam
- You are now much more technically aware and confident
- Start to show us and yourself what you are interested in – spread your wings a bit, there is a smorgasbord of interesting work out there, I challenge anyone not to find something that lights a spark in them.
- Don't be afraid to start challenging us – this is good for us and for you, challenging the perceptions and instincts of senior people is a key part of being a Consultant (the 'advocacy' role for starters....)
- Start to move out of the exam paradigm, we want to see you using that knowledge to deliver for the organisation you are working in, show us what you can do.
- Don't be afraid to volunteer for work.
- In particular, we want to see you working outside the PH team independently and picking up work
- 1:1s at this stage should include focus on matching your work to the portfolio

Post-Part B, Pre-Consultant

- Independence – agree parameters with your trainer and start to go to more meetings on your own, give advice on your own, get used to making decisions, and *making judgment calls*
- Take responsibility and accountability (the latter is harder!)
- If you have something to say, say it – it doesn't matter if it's to the Chief Executive, you will be doing this regularly when you are a Consultant, get used to it now
- Interview preparation. Get your story sorted. Talk about your **SKILLS**, have a library in your head of things you have done in the workplace, your achievements, how you delivered change, how you stepped up to the plate, how you came up with the solution etc. etc.
- Prepare your CV. Even if you don't have to submit it as part of the application process, it is a fantastic discipline and will remind you of all you have achieved

- 1:1 sat this stage are likely to be more light touch with exception reporting key