

Level I Fieldwork: It's Not Just Observation!

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Objectives


- Identify the purpose and goals of level I fieldwork.
- Understand why active participation in the level I fieldwork experience is imperative to integrate classroom learning with practical experience
- Identify at least 3 ways to make level I fieldwork an active experience in your setting

Purpose of Level I FW

To introduce students to the fieldwork experience, and develop a basic comfort level with an understanding of the needs of clients (AOTA, 1999).

To enrich didactic coursework through directed observation and participation in selected aspects of the occupational therapy process (AOTA, 1999).

The experience should provide the student with the opportunity to carry out professional responsibilities under supervision of a qualified occupational therapy practitioner serving as a role model (ACOTE, 2011).



Purpose of Level I Fieldwork

Fieldwork experience provides a context in which students can integrate, test and solidify their academic knowledge (Costa, 2007).

It is where students get to do in context rather than role play or develop goals and interventions for classroom cases (Costa, 2007).



Role of Academic Program vs. Role of Fieldwork Educator

Academic Program

- Identify course content areas to be enhanced by Level I Fieldwork experiences.
- Develop general goals that clearly reflect the purpose of the experience and level of performance to be achieved.
- Assure that objectives reflect the appropriate role of an OT or OTA student.
- Sequence the objectives from concrete to conceptual or from simple to increasing complexity.
- Identify facilities that may be able to provide the necessary learning experiences.
- Share the objectives with the fieldwork educators and ask them to identify those objectives that could be met in their facility.
- Discuss and coordinate fieldwork administration issues, such as scheduling, work load, report deadlines, etc.
- Collaborate with fieldwork educators to clearly identify the skill levels necessary for successful completion of Level I Fieldwork experience.
- Develop an evaluation form and protocol

AOTA, 1999

Role of Academic Program vs. Role of Fieldwork Educator

Fieldwork Educator

- Evaluate administrative aspects of the program to determine the feasibility of providing education experiences of high quality while maintaining the effectiveness of services. Some considerations are: providing the necessary supervision, scheduling learning experiences, and staff attitudes toward.
- Review objectives and learning experiences with academic representatives to assure that they address the Level I Fieldwork objectives of the program.
- Review the evaluation form and associated protocols and seek any necessary clarification prior to its implementation.
- Review the Level I Fieldwork objectives and the evaluation form to determine if the learning experiences can be provided at your fieldwork agency and if they are compatible with the philosophy of the program.
- In collaboration with the academic program faculty, identify, and design, if possible, specific learning activities which will meet Level I objectives.
- Those agencies providing fieldwork for both the professional and technical level student should have different learning experiences designed to clearly reflect role delineation.

Current Trends

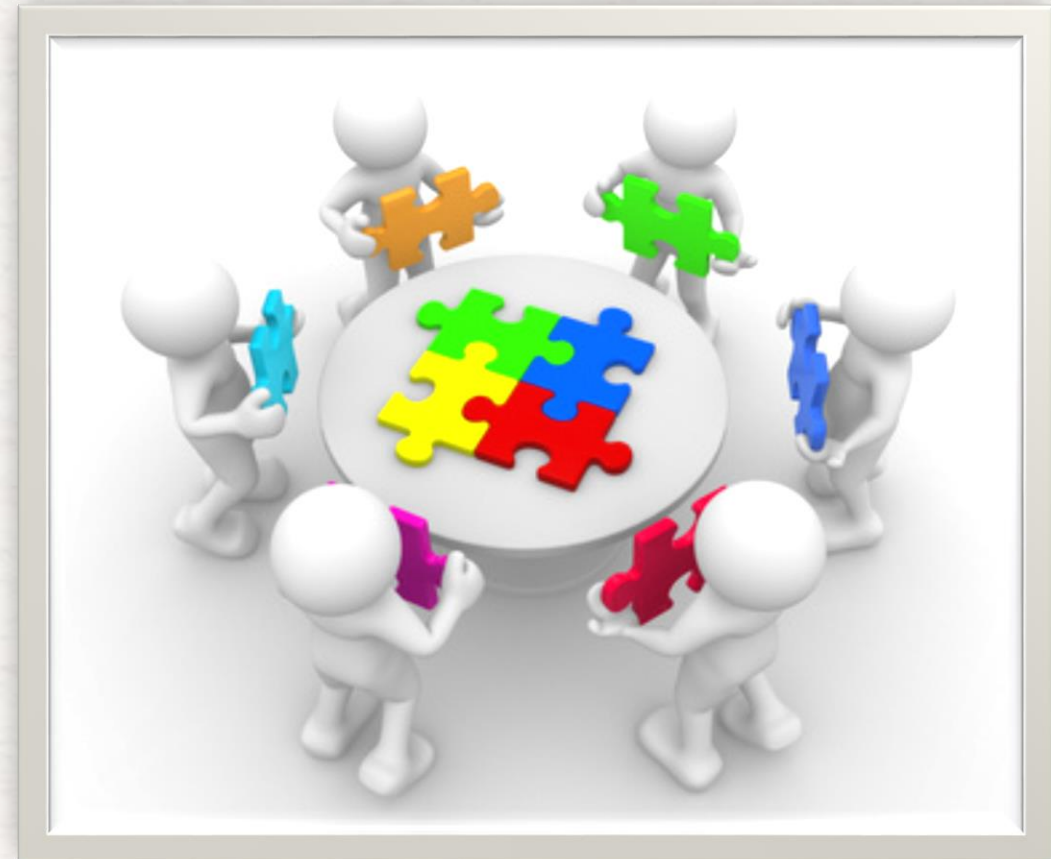
Active participation is NOT currently happening as much as it should!



Haynes, 2011 & Johnson, 2006

Theoretical Foundations

- Active learning
- Adult Learning Theory
- Situated Cognition



Active learning- What is it?

Active learning engages students in the process of learning through activities as opposed to passively listening to an expert (Freeman et al., 2014).

Active learning is described as interacting with information directly by observing and reflecting on the learning process. It involves acquiring information and ideas, experiences and reflection (Kammer et al., 2015).

Adult Learning Theory

- Knowles emphasizes that adults are self-directed and expect to take responsibility for decisions.
- Basic assumptions of Adult Learning Theory
 - (1) Adults need to know why they need to learn something
 - (2) Adults approach learning as problem-solving
 - (3) Adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value.
 - (4) Adults need to learn experientially/experience provides the basis for learning activities

Kearsley, G. & Cullata, R. (n.d.).

Situated Cognition

The acquisition of knowledge cannot be separated from the context in which this knowledge is collected (Pappas, 2015).



Why do you think active participation in level I fieldwork is so important?

Evidence Supporting Active Participation in Level I FW

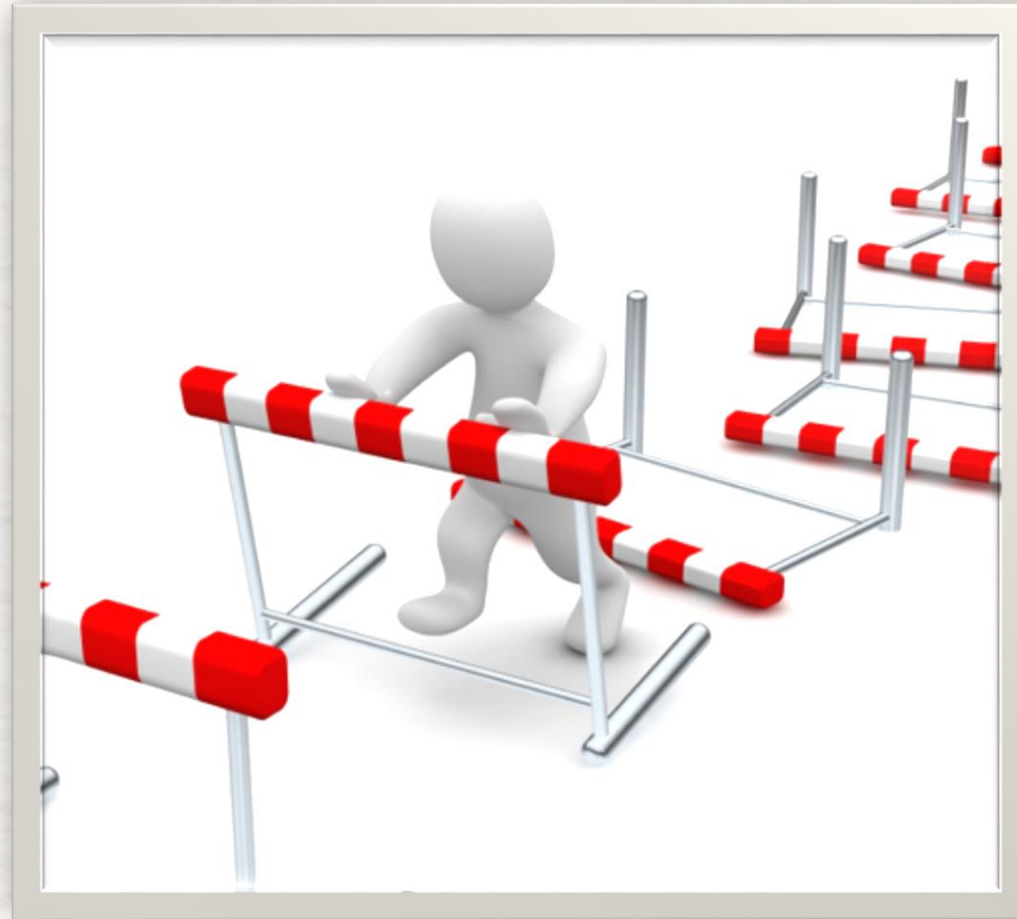
- Students still perceive that academic preparation does not adequately prepare them to meet employers' expectations for clinical skill performance (Hodgetts et al., 2007)
 - Active participation is needed!
- Griffiths and Ursick (2004) found that active learning in the classroom can only do so much



Evidence Supporting Active Participation in Level I FW

- Cooker (2010) found that **clinical reasoning** and **critical thinking skills** improved
- Hodgetts et al. (2007) found that students reported **hands-on fieldwork** experiences targeting intervention skills **most relevant**
- Educators who encouraged active participation on fw were viewed as facilitating the learning process by students (Grenier, 2015)

Barriers to Active participation



What are the barriers to active participation in your setting?

Barriers to Active Participation

- Lack of clear learning objectives
- Students academic preparation (does placement correlate to content taught)
- Acuity of fieldwork site
- Fieldwork educator experience
- Limited time for fieldwork educators to devote to students

Haynes, 2011; Greneir, 2015; Mulholland & Derdal, 2007

What are the solutions to active participation in your setting?



Working Together

However it happens, fieldwork sites and academic programs must work together to encourage active participation in level I fieldwork (Hanson, 2012)



Proposed Solutions

Academic Program

- Educate students on active learning
- Link assignments with fieldwork to develop clinical skills learned in the classroom
- Provide Level I Tool to sites

Fieldwork Coordinator/Educator

- Adapt Level I Tool to your setting
- Have a conversation with every student about where they are at in their academic program
- Communicate expectations on active learning in your setting to every student by identifying specific goals to target on the Level I Tool with consideration for where the student is at in their academic program

Using the Level I Fieldwork Active Participation & Engagement Tool

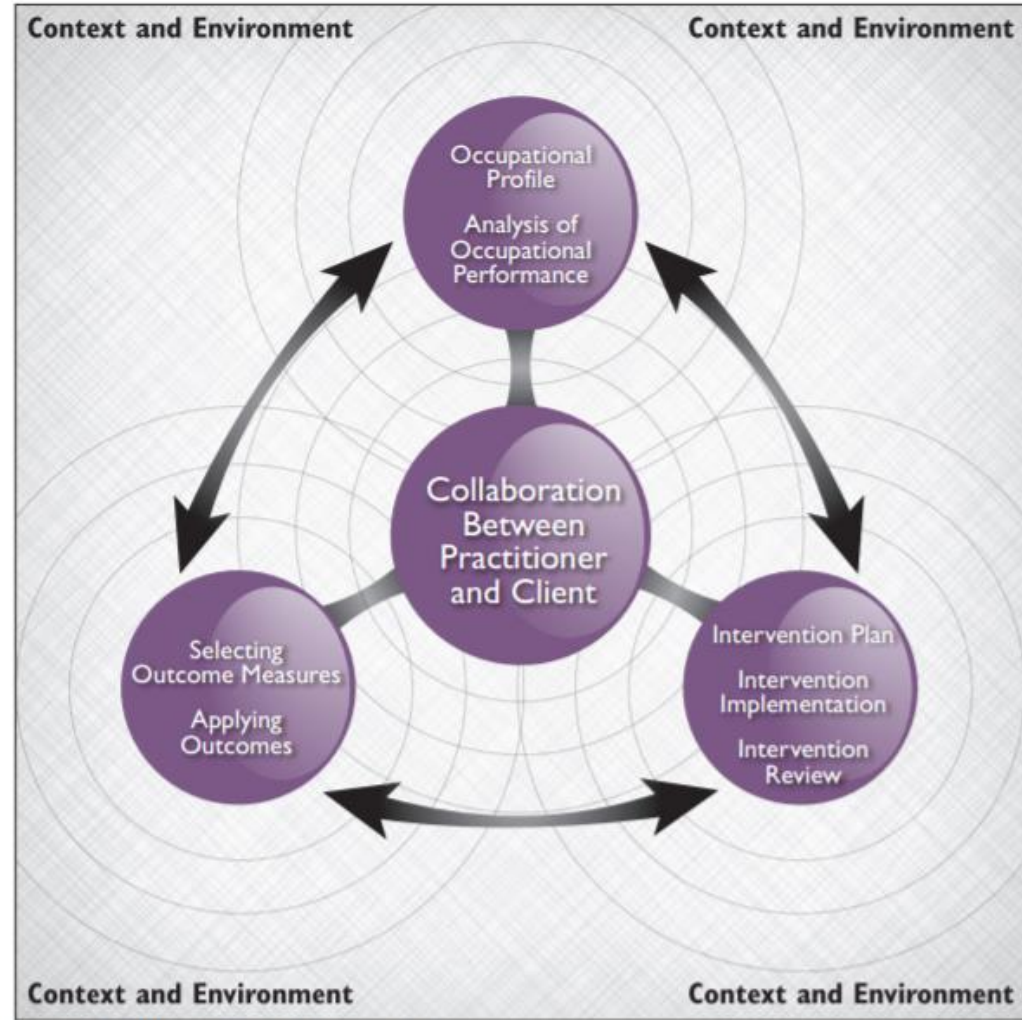


Figure 2. Occupational therapy's process.

Questions???

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