

Professional Behaviors (*Previously Generic Abilities)

Professional Behaviors are attributes, characteristics or behaviors that are not explicitly part of the profession's core of knowledge and technical skills but are nevertheless required for success in the profession. Ten Professional Behaviors were identified through a study conducted at University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1991-1992. The ten behaviors and definitions developed are:

Professional Behavior	Definition
1. Critical Thinking	The ability to question logically; to identify, generate, and evaluate elements or logical argument; recognize and differentiate facts, appropriate or faulty inferences, and assumptions; and to distinguish relevant irrelevant information. The ability to appropriately utilize, analyze, and critically evaluate scientific evidence to develop a logical argument, and to identify and determine the impact of bias on the decision making process.
2. Communication	The ability to communicate effectively (ie, verbal, non-verbal, reading, writing, and listening) for varied audiences and purposes.
3. Problem Solving	The ability to recognize and define problems, analyzes data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.
4. Interpersonal Skills	The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other health professionals, and the community in a culturally aware manner.
5. Responsibility	The ability to be accountable for the outcomes of personal and professional actions and to follow through on commitments that encompass the profession within the scope of work, community, and social responsibilities.
6. Professionalism	The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively while promoting the growth/development of the Physical Therapy profession.
7. Use of Constructive Feedback	The ability to seek out and identify quality sources of feedback, reflects on and integrates the feedback, and provides meaningful feedback to others.
8. Effective Use of Time and Resources	The ability to manage time and resources effectively to obtain the maximum possible benefit.
9. Stress Management	The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop and implement effective coping behaviors; this applies for interactions for: self, patient/clients and their families, members of the health care team and in work/life scenarios.
10. Commitment to Learning	The ability to self-direct learning to include the identification of needs and sources of learning; and to continually seek and apply new knowledge, behaviors, and skills.

*Originally developed by the Physical Therapy Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, May, et al (1995). Model for ability-based assessment in physical therapy education. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 9(1), 3-6. Updated 2010.

Behavioral Criteria for the 10 Professional Behaviors

Generic Ability	Beginning Level	Developing Level	Entry Level	Post-Entry Level
Critical Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises relevant questions • Considers all available information • Articulates ideas. • Understands the scientific method • States the results of scientific literature but has not developed the consistent ability to critically appraise findings (i.e. methodology and conclusion) • Recognizes “holes” in knowledge base • Demonstrates acceptance of limited knowledge and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels challenged to examine ideas • Critically analyzes the literature and applies it to patient management • Utilizes didactic knowledge, research evidence, and clinical experience to formulate new ideas • Seeks alternative ideas • Formulates alternative hypotheses • Critiques hypotheses and ideas at a level consistent with knowledge base • Acknowledges presence of contradictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinguishes relevant from irrelevant patient data • Readily formulates and critiques alternative hypotheses and ideas • Infers applicability of information across populations • Exhibits openness to contradictory ideas • Identifies appropriate measures and determines effectiveness of applied solutions efficiently • Justifies solutions selected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops new knowledge through research, professional writing and/or professional presentations • Thoroughly critiques hypotheses and ideas often crossing disciplines in thought process • Weighs information value based on source and level of evidence • Identifies complex patterns of associations • Distinguishes when to think intuitively vs. analytically • Recognizes own biases and suspends judgmental thinking • Challenges others to think critically
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the English language (verbal and written): uses correct grammar, accurate spelling and expression, legible handwriting • Recognizes impact of non-verbal communication in self and others • Recognizes the verbal and non-verbal characteristics that portray confidence • Utilizes electronic communication appropriately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes and modifies communication (verbal, non-verbal, written and electronic) to meet the needs of different audiences • Restates, reflects and clarifies message(s) • Communicate collaboratively with both individuals and groups • Collects necessary information from all pertinent individuals in the patient/client management process • Provides effective education (verbal, non-verbal, written and electronic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates the ability to maintain appropriate control of the communication exchange with individuals and groups • Presents persuasive and explanatory verbal, written or electronic messages with logical organizations and sequencing • Maintains open and constructive communication • Utilizes communication technology effectively and efficiently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts messages to address needs, expectations, and prior knowledge of the audience to maximize learning • Effectively delivers messages capable of influencing patients, the community and society • Provides education locally, regionally and/or nationally • Mediates conflict

Problem Solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes problems • States problems clearly • Describes known solutions to problems • Identifies resources needed to develop solutions • Uses technology to search for and locate resources • Identifies possible solutions and probable outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes problems • Identifies contributors to problems • Consults with others to clarify problems • Appropriately seeks input or guidance • Prioritizes recourse (analysis and critique of recourse) • Considers consequences of possible solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently locates, prioritizes and uses resources to solve problems • Accepts responsibility for implementing solutions • Implements solutions • Reassesses solutions • Evaluates outcomes • Modifies solutions based on the outcomes and current evidence • Evaluates generalizability of current evidence to a particular problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weighs advantages and disadvantages of a solution to a problem • Participates in outcome studies • Participates in formal quality assessment in work environment • Seeks solutions to community health related problems • Considers second the third order effects of solutions chosen
Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains professional demeanor in all interactions • Demonstrates interest in patients as individuals • Communicates with others in a respectful and confident manner • Respects differences in personality, lifestyle and learning styles during interactions with all persons • Maintains confidentiality in all interactions • Recognizes the emotions and bias that one brings to all professional interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes the non-verbal communication and emotions that others bring to professional interactions • Establishes trust • Seeks to gain input from others • Respects role of others • Accommodates differences in learning styles as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates active listening skills and reflects back to original concern to determine course of action • Responds effectively to unexpected situations • Demonstrates ability to build partnerships • Applies conflict management strategies when dealing with challenging interactions • Recognizes the impact of non-verbal communication and emotional responses during interactions and modifies own behaviors based on them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes mentor relationships • Recognizes the impact that non-verbal communication and the emotions of self and others have during interactions and demonstrates the ability to modify the behaviors of self and others during the interaction

Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates punctuality • Provides a safe and secure environment for patients • Assumes responsibility for actions • Follows through on commitments • Articulates limitations and readiness to learn • Abides by all policies of academic program and clinical facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays awareness of and sensitivity to diverse populations • Completes projects without prompting • Delegates tasks as needed • Collaborates with team members, patients and families • Provides evidence-based patient care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educates patients as consumers of health care services • Encourages patient accountability • Directs patients to other health care professionals as needed • Acts as a patient advocate • Promotes evidence-based practice in health care settings • Accepts responsibility for implementing solutions • Demonstrates accountability for all decisions and behaviors in academic and clinical settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes role as a leader • Encourages and displays leadership • Facilitates program development and modification • Promotes clinical training for students and coworkers • Monitors and adapts to changes in the health care system • Promotes service to the community
Professionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abides by all aspects of the academic program honor code and the APTA Code of Ethics • Demonstrates awareness of state licensure regulations • Projects professional image • Attends professional meetings • Demonstrates cultural/generational awareness, ethical values, respect, and continuous regard for all classmates, academic and clinical faculty/staff, patients, families, and other healthcare providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies positive professional role models within the academic and clinical settings • Acts on moral commitment during all academic and clinical activities Identifies when the input of classmates, co-workers and other healthcare professionals will result in optimal outcome and acts accordingly to attain such input and share decision making • Discusses societal expectations of the profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of scope of practice as evidenced by treatment of patients within scope of practice, referring to other healthcare professionals as necessary • Provides patient/family centered care at all times as evidenced by provision of patient/family education, seeking patient input and informed consent for all aspects of care and maintenance of patient dignity • Seeks excellence in professional practice by participation in professional organizations and attendance at sessions or participation in activities that further education/professional development Utilizes evidence to guide clinical decision making and the provision of patient care, following guidelines for best practices Discusses role of physical therapy within the healthcare system and in population health • Demonstrates leadership in collaboration with both individuals and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively promotes and advocates for the profession • Pursues leadership roles • Supports research • Participates in program development • Participates in education of the community • Demonstrates the ability to practice effectively in multiple settings • Acts as a clinical instructor • Advocates for the patient, the community and society

Use of Constructive Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates active listening skills • Assesses own performance • Actively seeks feedback from appropriate sources • Demonstrates receptive behavior and positive attitude toward feedback • Incorporates specific feedback into behaviors • Maintains two-way communication without defensiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critiques own performance accurately • Responds effectively to constructive feedback • Utilizes feedback when establishing professional and patient related goals • Develops and implements a plan of action in response to feedback • Provides constructive and timely feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently engages in a continual process of self evaluation of skills, knowledge and abilities • Seeks feedback from patients/clients and peers/mentors • Readily integrates feedback provided from a variety of sources to improve skills, knowledge and abilities • Uses multiple approaches when responding to feedback • Reconciles differences with sensitivity • Modifies feedback given to patients/clients according to their learning styles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in non-judgmental, constructive problem solving discussions • Acts as conduit for feedback between multiple sources • Seeks feedback from a variety of sources to include students/supervisees/peers/supervisors/patients • Utilizes feedback when analyzing and updating professional goals
Effective Use of Time and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comes prepared for the day's activities/responsibilities • Identifies resource limitations (i.e. information, time, experience) • Determines when and how much help/assistance is needed • Accesses current evidence in a timely manner • Verbalizes productivity standards and identifies barriers to meeting productivity standards • Self-identifies and initiates learning opportunities during unscheduled time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes effective methods of searching for evidence for practice decisions • Recognizes own resource contributions • Shares knowledge and collaborates with staff to utilize best current evidence • Discusses and implements strategies for meeting productivity standards • Identifies need for and seeks referrals to other disciplines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses current best evidence • Collaborates with members of the team to maximize the impact of treatment available • Has the ability to set boundaries, negotiate, compromise, and set realistic expectations • Gathers data and effectively interprets and assimilates the data to determine plan of care • Utilizes community resources in discharge planning • Adjusts plans, schedule etc. as patient needs and circumstances dictate • Meets productivity standards of facility while providing quality care and completing non-productive work activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advances profession by contributing to the body of knowledge (outcomes, case studies, etc) • Applies best evidence considering available resources and constraints • Organizes and prioritizes effectively • Prioritizes multiple demands and situations that arise on a given day • Mentors peers and supervisees in increasing productivity and/or effectiveness without decrement in quality of care

Stress Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes own stressors • Recognizes distress or problems in others • Seeks assistance as needed • Maintains professional demeanor in all situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively employs stress management techniques • Reconciles inconsistencies in the educational process • Maintains balance between professional and personal life • Accepts constructive feedback and clarifies expectations • Establishes outlets to cope with stressors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates appropriate affective responses in all situations • Responds calmly to urgent situations with reflection and debriefing as needed • Prioritizes multiple commitments • Reconciles inconsistencies within professional, personal and work/life environments • Demonstrates ability to defuse potential stressors with self and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes when problems are unsolvable • Assists others in recognizing and managing stressors • Demonstrates preventative approach to stress management • Establishes support networks for self and others • Offers solutions to the reduction of stress • Models work/life balance through health/wellness behaviors in professional and personal life
Commitment to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizes information needs • Analyzes and subdivides large questions into components • Identifies own learning needs based on previous experiences • Welcomes and/or seeks new learning opportunities • Seeks out professional literature • Plans and presents and in-service, research or cases studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researches and studies areas where own knowledge base is lacking in order to augment learning and practice • Applies new information and re-evaluates performance • Accepts that there may be more than one answer to a problem • Recognizes the need to and is able to verify solutions to problems • Reads articles critically and understands limits of application to professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectfully questions conventional wisdom • Formulates and re-evaluates position based on available evidence • Demonstrates confidence in sharing new knowledge with all staff levels • Modifies programs and treatments based on newly-learned skills and considerations • Consults with other health professionals and physical therapists for treatment ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as a mentor not only to other PT's, but to other health professionals • Utilizes mentors who have knowledge available to them • Continues to seek and review relevant literature • Works towards clinical specialty certifications • Seeks specialty training • Is committed to understanding the PT's role in the health care environment today (i.e. wellness • clinics, massage therapy, holistic medicine) • Pursues participation in clinical education as an educational opportunity