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**The Difficult Learner**  
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## Outline for Today



- A) Introduction and overview (Peyser)
- B) Identification of learners with Difficulties-What clues should one look for early on? (Hansen)
- C) How has a well established LIC program addressed a difficult learner (Hirsh)
- D) Remediation and grading issues (Poncelet)
- E) Break out into small groups (Sheline, Weigle, Jackson, Hansen, Hirsh, Poncelet)
- F) Large group discussion, with summaries from breakout groups. (All)

## Workshop objectives



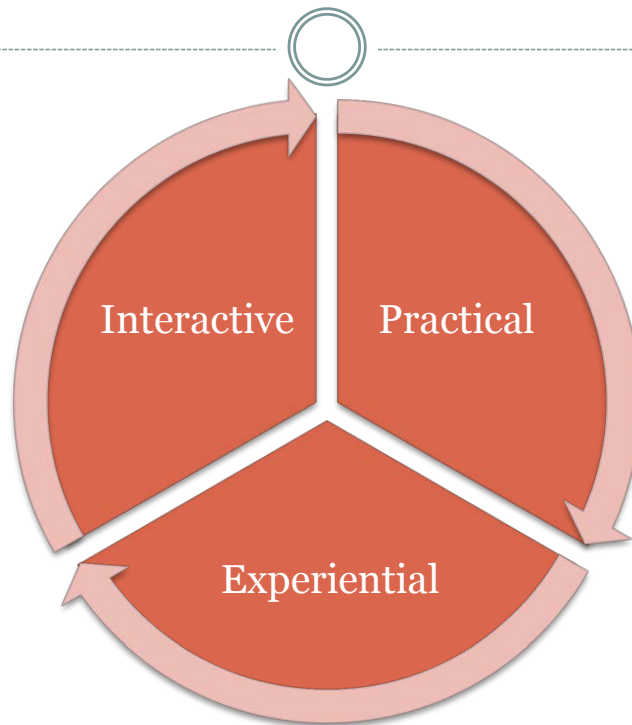
- Describe the typical findings and clues to suggest that a learner might be in trouble, or is difficult?
- Discuss unique opportunities that exist within a LIC curriculum that might allow for early identification of problems.
- Discuss how preceptors receive assistance so that they can better cope with a student who is struggling?
- Describe best methods for achieving an educational diagnosis so that a remediation plan can be properly implemented?

## Disclosure Slide for the group



<b>Research Support / P.I.</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Employee</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Consultant</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Major Stockholder</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Speakers Bureau</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Honoraria</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>
<b>Scientific Advisory Board</b>	<b>No relevant conflicts of interest to declare</b>

# Discussion Guidelines For Today



We hope to provide new items to add to your educational tool chest



## Difficult Learner Definition



- “A problem learner can range from a student who needs more teaching and supervision... to a <learner> who has more deep seated issues. The educational agenda has become derailed and, try as we might, we cannot get it back on track and we will need strategies for developing an educational diagnosis. We will need help to clarify an effective educational strategy.”

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Len Kelly MD, Northern Ontario School of Medicine,  
From Community-Based Medical Education: A Teacher’s  
Handbook, Radcliffe Publishing 2012

## Why are “difficult learners” important?



- Difficult learners are more common than one would think.
- Difficult learners take their tolls on teachers (and program directors).
- Understanding what constitutes a “difficult learner” can help us to become better teachers.
- How we address these learners has significant downstream effects on individuals, groups, instructors, and programs.



What happens when the difficult learner is really a difficult teacher?



Has anyone here had a difficult learner?



## Break out sessions and assignments



- A) How might clinician educators provide feedback to difficult learners?
- B) How can a difficult learner affect a teacher, and how can this be addressed, and burnout avoided?
- C) What are tangible ways that one might initially interact and identify a difficult learner?
- D) What external factors might make a difficult situation or learner more problematic?
- E) What should be happen when the difficult one is the teacher, not the learner?
- F) What happens if the difficult learner is that way because he/she is especially gifted or skillful?

## In Summary...



- Difficult/Unsafe Learners are out there, and if you teach enough, you will have some.
- Important to identify these individuals, and to remember to “throw up the red flag.”
- Get help-you are not alone.
- Learn from the experience so you can become a better teacher going forward.