

## **What it Takes To Become a Successful Entry-Level Therapist Survival Guide for an Occupational Therapy Fieldwork**

- Be on time and ready to work at your start time – not just walking in the door at your start time.
- Be responsible for your end of the supervisory process
  - Be prepared to look up information you don't know
    - Don't expect your supervisor to have all the answers
  - When your supervisor asks you to look up something, do so in a timely manner (ask what the deadline is) and take the initiative to get back to your supervisor with the answers
- Take initiative
  - If you feel ready to take on more patients or more complex patients, discuss it with your supervisor
  - Conversely, if you feel overwhelmed and stressed out, let your supervisor know
  - You should use your "downtime" productively:
    - Do research for your assignments
    - Ask your supervisor or other staff if you can assist
    - Observe with the other disciplines
    - DO NOT use the time to text or use social media
- Ask questions!
  - What don't you know?
  - Ask your supervisor or other staff to describe their clinical reasoning for a specific evaluation or treatment session
- Be prepared
  - Think ahead about what your treatment session will look like
  - Develop alternative plans for the treatment session – what will you do if the patient is doing better or worse than your expectation
- Develop good communication skills
  - Give honest, respectful feedback to your supervisor
    - Is there something your supervisor can do to be a better educator (remember, she is a therapist first)
- Be flexible/adaptable
  - Go with the flow. Each day will bring new experiences and maybe a few surprises
- Be open, receptive and responsive to feedback
  - Don't argue with your supervisor, if you disagree, do so in a professional manner
- Be respectful of your supervisor's time and knowledge
- Use the resources available to you
  - University/college sources
  - Hospital libraries
  - Textbooks in department
  - Your textbooks (bring them to the clinic with you)
  - Don't just "Google" information. Make sure your sources are reliable and valid. For heaven's sake, don't use Wikipedia!