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Maggie's Top 10 Ways to Have an AWESOME Internship

Leading as a Student Intern: An Interview with Maggie Bryant, DPT

By Jim Hoyme

Leaders Care.

Just in case you haven't done so already . . . Check out this YouTube video (I've posted it on Twitter about a dozen times and in previous ENewsletters).

<http://bit.ly/LeadersCARE>

I LOVE it because it is SO True. Leaders have EMPATHY. Leaders CARE about people. Physical Therapist and Student Physical Therapist Leaders care about every teammate and all of their patients. It's a beautiful thing when it happens.

Well – here is an interview with a young leader.

Maggie Bryant, DPT. Maggie Cares. She is a great young *Self Starter* Follower and role model Leader (by the way – for those of you who have participated in The Leadership Edge – you know what is *Self Starter* is). She graduated this spring from the University of Minnesota Physical Therapy Program. She was selected for the Residency Program at The University of Southern California's Division of Biokinesiology and Physical Therapy, and she is just getting started at USC after an AWESOME internship at OSI Physical Therapy in Stillwater, Mn.

Hey Mike O'Donnell, Rob Landel, and Joe Godges – USC picked a GREAT resident!

As an intern, Maggie *hit it out of the park* at OSI – impressing every team member. While every one at OSI was thrilled that Maggie was selected for the prestigious USC residency, they all said, "I wish she was staying here to work with us!"

When I heard about Maggie's performance, I Naturally thought . . . "Hmmm . . . So what made Maggie SO special on her internship? What was her secret?"

Well . . . Let's find out from Maggie.

JH: OK Maggie. I've known you for a couple of years. I first met you During the StrengthsFinder class in your first year at the U of M, and there you showed me that you have a good grasp of YOUR strengths. And I really enjoyed your insightful contributions during The Leadership Edge program your second year. So I wasn't surprised when members of the OSI Stillwater team called me – Mike, Julie, Katie, Linda –and said things like, 'Hey Jim . . . this Maggie Bryant – for a student intern – is really a team player and a valuable contributor.' 'Maggie is one of the best students we've ever had!' What did you do that made such a big impact?

MB: Thanks Jim, for asking me to contribute. There are a lot of things you have to do well as an intern, but I 'boil it down' to 10 key points that really made a difference to

me. I'm really glad to hear the OSI team appreciated my contributions to the team, but I have to say . . . paying attention to these 10 behaviors not only helped me build a good relationship with everyone at the clinic, they helped me learn and grow as a clinician, leader, and team player.

1) Be on Time, Never Procrastinate . . . Ever

Being on time ensures you are ready to go and gives you time to catch up from the previous day. Plus . . . everyone on the team notices it.

2) Take the Time to Get to Know Every Staff Member

The quality and friendliness of the team members says a lot about management – high quality people = high quality organization. Showing you have an interest in the whole team shows you respect each individual as well as the whole organization. Everyone notices your attention and appreciates it. Each team member can help you learn and grow, and if you get to know them, they are more willing to help YOU.

- o Learn everyone's name in the first day or two. People like to be addressed by their name.
- o Take time to learn what each team member does – physical therapist, occupational therapist, PTA, aide, front desk staff – everyone. This shows you value and respect what they do. It's a team game.

Relationships

3) Take the Time with Patients (The 1st Leadership R – Relationships)

As a physical therapist, relationships with your patients are critical to help them improve and to help YOU grow. Building good Relationships HELPS:

- o You learn the importance of this skill
- o Attain patient buy in to your plan and programs
- o Your Patients know what to expect – upfront

4) Be a "Self Starter"

- o Say yes. Proactively seek challenges and opportunities, and/or be aware that 'issues ' arise. When asked to do or lead something, agree to do so in a positive spirit.
- o Say and Do things in ways that inspire those around you to grow individually and as a team.
- o You NEVER will know everything, so never turn down a learning situation. Late nights, early mornings, weekends- always make the best of the situation and learn from it. Take advantage of every opportunity.

Self Starter Followers
Proactive Positive
Enthusied Self-Confident

The 4R Leadership Model
Relationships Roles
Responsibilities Results

5) Patient Centeredness

Show each and every one of your patients that they are the most important person to you at that time.

- o Listen to your patients more than talk. Listen actively and attentively. Did you know that on average it only takes 4 to 6 seconds until a medical professional interrupts a patient?
- o Ask every patient what he or she wants to accomplish and for specific details about what motivates or inspires him or her.

6) Good or Bad Clinical . . . Learn from It

The odds are that you will probably have at least one clinical experience that is bad for one reason or another. You have to make the best of it. Remember – it's a pretty short period of time in the grand scheme of things.

- o If you feel your CI is not really teaching you, or if you simply don't get along with your CI – well . . . take it upon yourself to find opportunities to learn. Be a Self Starter.
- o If you make a mistake, ask for advice, try to solve the problem, and move forward. Don't dwell on it.

Learning

7) Focus on the Opportunity at Hand

ADD and ADHD have risen 66% in the last ten years. That makes it hard for a lot of people to focus, however, if you want to get the most out of your internship learning experience, you must focus on your responsibilities and seize each learning opportunity.

- o Be present – mentally and physically in every situation. Don't let your mind wander.
- o NEVER take out your cell phone with your CI, others on the team, or patients. No texting, calls, Facebook, Twitter, or social media while you are in the clinic.

8) Leadership Comes at a Cost

You must give up your own wants and needs for the betterment of others.

- *If you are at lunch or have a 'break in the action' and someone asks you for your help . . . don't hesitate . . . help her or him.*
- *Give your time and energy for others.*
- *Write a hand written note at the end of every clinical to people who helped YOU. Hand written means SO much more than an email.*

9) Take Risks

Let's face it – we are student interns. We will make mistakes. Don't be afraid to fail. You will always recover.

- *Ask a lot of questions of the other therapists – the entire team for that matter. You won't 'sound stupid' for asking.*
- *Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know that." Or "I don't understand that." "Can you help me better understand?"*
- *Be Accountable for Your Actions*

We all must be responsible for our actions and expectations. Hold yourself accountable for all expectations and responsibilities.

- *Make sure you understand your responsibilities. If you don't know, ask your CI.*
- *Ask your CI and others, "How am I doing?"*
- *Never blame someone else.*

10) Be Accountable for Your Actions

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- *Make sure you understand your responsibilities. If you don't know, ask your CI.*
- *Ask your CI and others, "How am I doing?"*
- *Never blame someone else.*

JH: *Wow! This is AWESOME advice, Maggie. So what I am hearing from you is this: Build trusted relationships with everyone, listen to your patient and find out what is important to them, hold yourself accountable but don't be afraid to fail, embrace every learning opportunity, and be a leader. How did I do?*

MB: *That's great Jim!*

JH: *Great stuff, Maggie. Your 10 points of advice show that you truly are a Self Starter Follower who is a role model leader. Very impressive for a PT student who has just become a DPT. Just one more thing . . . tell us what inspires you about being a physical therapist and why you are excited about your new career.*

MB: *I strongly feel as though everything in my life has set me up for this opportunity. Having played sports and suffering through multiple injuries, self-diagnosis and learning about efficient healing processes' became my most obsessive hobby. I always joke that had we been able to, I would have majored in physical therapy with a specialty in sports medicine heading into my elementary years. Being a two sport collegiate athlete and student athletic trainer I had the chance to learn more about the body's injury progression. Throughout these personal and professional experiences I have fallen in love with helping and serving other people. My genuine desire to help others is why I chose to work in the field of Physical Therapy. I am excited to learn from my patient's, mentors, and co-workers in my upcoming career!*

JH: *Thank you for your great advice, Maggie, and I want to wish you the best on your USC Residency. Like you, I hope the PT students who read this take your recommendations to heart, put them into action, and have GREAT internships!*

– Jim

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