A critical point of differentiation for academic medical centers and teaching facilities is that residency faculty have a privilege and responsibility to prepare the next generation of physicians. The idea that residents adopt behaviors that their faculty role model “is an explicit educational methodology for learning that is sustainable.”

Teaching residents to communicate well with patients is the right thing to do.

Residents will adopt behaviors that are role modeled and rely on these skills for both patient care as well as their own financial success throughout their careers. According to the New England Journal of Medicine, “Attending physicians identified as being excellent role models reported stressing the importance of the doctor-patient relationship.”

Ask yourself which scenario below provides a better learning experience for the resident:

1. The faculty physician walks into a patient room, stands at the bedside, and launches into a diagnosis and treatment plan.

2. The faculty physician sits at the patient bedside, engages the patient in a dialog to ensure the patient’s understanding of the diagnosis, and develops a treatment plan that the patient understands, supports, and affirms they will be able to execute.

Role modeling effective communication with patients requires demonstration of empathy, which can be facilitated via the “bundle” or communication framework called **AIDET®** (Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, Thank you). AIDET, developed by Studer Group, involves acknowledging the patient and family, introducing ourselves and our skill set to establish rapport and lower anxiety, making sure the patient understands the timeline or next steps, explaining in a way the patient can understand, and closing with courtesy by thanking the patient.

Accompanying the verbal component of the AIDET communication framework are behaviors, such as sitting at the bedside, making eye contact, and using body language that demonstrates interest and caring.

Once residency faculty have committed to improving resident communication skills, it is essential that communication skill building be approached in a methodical manner. Establishing a common educational platform among faculty may be achieved through training. AIDET and the related non-verbal behaviors can be taught during faculty development sessions using a variety of Studer Group resources.

Helpful resources include:

1. An **AIDET** resource web page to help improve patient perception of care, decrease patient anxiety, increase patient engagement and build customer loyalty.*

2. A one-page overview **AIDET for Providers in an Academic Setting: Quick Tips**, provides embedded links to video examples.*

3. A Developing Your Own **AIDET Worksheet**.*
As faculty, we’re accustomed to giving feedback to residents to improve their skills. Similarly, before moving on to training residents, faculty should observe each other using this AIDET validation checklist to evaluate and improve their skills.

Once faculty are confident in their ability to role model in a standardized manner, it is helpful to provide residents foundational training to establish common understanding and expectations. To access a related resource for residents, describing the why, what, and how of communication with the patients, please follow the link to “Connecting the Dots between Residency Training, Accreditation Requirements and Patient Experience”.

*Learning Lab resources exclusively available to organizations coached by Studer Group.

