

B710 Independent Clinical Project
Student Self-Assessment re Professional Skills
August 2007

To aid you in identifying your educational goals for this independent clinical project, we recommend that you complete this Self-Assessment prior to starting your internship. Please bring this memo with you on your first visit to the internship site. Discuss it with your supervising attorney. Use it as a guide in writing your reflective essays.

You probably have a sense of areas in which you already have some ability as well as areas which need work. The listing which follows is designed to help you identify skills on which you wish to focus. The list is by no means a complete index of the types of skills a well rounded lawyer should possess, nor are all skills relevant to all placements, but the list contains enough illustrations to get you thinking. Please check a few general areas (A-M) you most want to work on during the semester. Also, please circle any sub-topics that are particularly important to you.

Feel free to add to the list.

A. Interviewing

1. Ability to put people at ease during initial meeting.
2. Ability to allow client to tell story from his or her point of view.
3. Ability to elicit client's principal concerns and desired solutions.
4. Ability to obtain information in a systematic manner during interview.
5. Ability to make appropriate use of note taking.
6. Ability to assess and evaluate non-verbal behavior.
7. Ability to maintain appropriate eye contact and body language.
8. Ability to encourage communication by active listening.
9. Ability to explore substantive elements of each potential cause of action.
10. Ability to build rapport by non-judgmental response to client.

11. Ability to build rapport by providing recognition to client.
12. Ability to determine when to use open-ended, narrow, or closed questions.
13. Ability to use open-ended, narrow, or closed questions to obtain information.
14. Ability to give client a clear, confident, accurate statement of his or her legal position.
15. Ability to tell client if don't know answers.

B. Counseling

16. Ability to identify alternatives (settlement, trial, etc.) and explain them clearly.
17. Ability to evaluate case and predict likely outcomes.
18. Ability to help client explore the economic, social and psychological advantages and disadvantages of options.
19. Ability to respect client's right to make own decisions even when lawyer would choose differently.

C. Negotiation

20. Ability to recognize the difference between positions and interests.
21. Ability to probe for other party's position, goals, and interests.
22. Ability to use the negotiation to obtain relevant information about the case from the other party.
23. Ability to present client's position in a persuasive way.
24. Ability to develop options for enlarging opportunities for mutual gain.
25. Ability to provide reasoned basis for concessions.

26. Ability to handle aggressive or disruptive tactics of other party.

D. Fact Investigation

Formal Discovery

27. Ability to draft interrogatories.
28. Ability to draft requests for production of documents.
29. Ability to draft requests for admission.
30. Ability to prepare questions for depositions.

Informal Discovery

31. Ability to identify possible sources of information (witnesses, documents, records).
32. Ability to motivate witnesses to provide information.

E. Legal Research

33. Ability to develop a strategy for conducting research.
34. Ability to use legal research tools in both print and electronic format.
35. Ability to use proper legal citation form.
36. Creativity and imagination in conducting research.

F. Analysis

37. Ability to analyze court decisions.
38. Ability to apply decisions to client facts.
39. Ability to analyze statutes and regulations and apply them to client's problem.

40. Ability to synthesize a number of cases and statutes.

G. Writing

41. Use of correct grammar

42. Use of a style of writing appropriate to the type of document and audience.

43. Communication of legal analysis in organized, clear, precise manner.

44. Use of careful and critical editing to refine work.

45. Presentation of ideas in a logical order.

46. Ability to be persuasive in presentation of arguments.

47. Ability to draft:

-Complaints

-Answers

-Legislation

-Contracts

-Responses to discovery requests

-Objective memoranda

-Briefs

-Opinion letters

-Wills

H. Hearings and Oral Advocacy

48. Ability to speak clearly, confidently, persuasively.

49. Ability to respond to weak points in client's position.

50. Ability to respond articulately to unanticipated comments.

51. Ability to prepare witnesses.

52. Understanding of rules of evidence.

53. Ability to make and respond to evidentiary objections.
54. Ability to conduct direct examination.
55. Ability to conduct cross examination.
56. Presentation of opening argument.
57. Presentation of closing argument.
58. Ability to introduce documents into evidence.

I. Planning

59. Ability to plan carefully for all events (meetings with clients, telephone calls, research, hearings, etc.).
60. Ability to define client's problem accurately.
61. Ability to avoid premature labeling of problem.
62. Ability to set priorities.
63. Ability to develop theory of case.
64. Flexibility and adaptability to change.
65. Ability to generate options.
66. Sense of the way institutions operate.
67. Sense of the way people operate.
68. Ability to anticipate future events.
69. Ability to respond to the unexpected.
70. Ability to tolerate uncertainty.
71. Creativity and imagination in planning.

J. Responsibility

- 72. Keeping accurate records of activities (meetings, calls, research, etc.).
- 73. Keeping organized and orderly files.
- 74. Keeping appointments on time.
- 75. Knowing when to ask for help.

K. Interpersonal Skills

- 76. Working effectively with support staff.
- 77. Sensitive to her people's needs and reactions.
- 78. Ability to pick up on non-verbal communication.
- 79. Ability to accept feedback without becoming defensive.
- 80. Ability to give feedback without being judgmental.

L. Ethics

- 81. Ability to complete careful and thorough research.
- 82. Ability to use legal authority and facts.
- 83. Truthful in presentation of arguments, positions.
- 84. Familiar with and sensitive to ethical issues of practice.

M. Other

- 85.
- 86.
- 87.