

Error Prevention Tools

SBAR for Handoff

What it is:

SBAR is a tool for planning and structuring communication about a situation, task or problem. It allows for quick, concise communication. Each letter stands for information that is important to communicate.

How we do it:

SITUATION - The Bottom Line or the "Headline"

(Who/What you're calling about, the problem, your concerns)

BACKGROUND - What They Need to Know

(Review pertinent information: environment, procedures, patient condition, employee status, etc.)

ASSESSMENT - Summary of the Problem:

(Your View of the situation: "I think the problem is..." or "I'm not sure what the problem is"; Urgency of action: "The situation is deteriorating rapidly – we need to do something")

RECOMMENDATION - What is needed for the Other Person

(Your suggestion or request of the other person)

SBAR Communication Tips

- Use the words – "Here's the Situation/ Background/ Assessment/ Recommendation" – to reinforce the technique and prepare the receiver for the information being given.
- Jot a few quick notes in SBAR format before speaking.
- Use other communication tools such as 3-Way Repeat and Read Backs, Phonetic and Numeric clarifications and Clarifying questions to ensure accuracy and understanding of information communicated.
- If someone begins a rambling communication, coach them by saying, **"Please give it to me in an SBAR."**

Speak Up Using CUS

What it is and Why we do it:

Patient safety is our first priority. We need to be aware of each others' work. We are all equals when it comes to patient safety and personal safety. If we observe a situation we believe compromises safety of a patient or employee, we have a responsibility to raise a concern.

How we do it:

Speaking up using CUS is a communication tool that can help us assert a concern in a non-threatening way.

CUS stands for:

- I'm **C**oncerned
- I'm **U**ncomfortable
- This is a **S**afety Issue

When we do it:

When we need to assert a concern in a non-threatening way, to avoid coming on too strong when a simple question may work. CUS also helps escalate the concern if it is not addressed.

3-Way Repeat Back or 3-Way Read Back

What it is and Why we do it:

Communicating clearly is about making sure we give and receive accurate and complete information.

3-Way Repeat Back is a technique to ensure information is heard correctly by repeating what was said.

3-Way Read Back is a technique to ensure information is heard and written down correctly by reading what was written down.

How we do it:

- **Sender initiates** communication using receiver's name. Sender provides an order, a request or information to receiver in a clear and concise way.
- **Receiver acknowledges** receipt by a repeat back or a read back of the order, request or information.
- **Sender acknowledges** the accuracy of the repeat back by saying, "That's correct." If not correct, sender repeats the communication.

Question and Resolve

What it is and Why we do it:

A questioning attitude is a habit of the mind that ensures our choices are best for the given situation. A questioning attitude is both asking questions and questioning the answers.

How we do it:

- **Question** is an internal consistency check. Does this information make sense? Is the information consistent with what I would expect?
- **Resolve** If there are problems or inconsistencies, resolve the concern using an independent, qualified source.

When we do it:

Rule-based and knowledge-based errors occur when we are not thinking clearly. Since patient safety is our first priority, we will think about what we are seeing and doing. Stop if things do not make sense.

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Clarifying Questions

What it is and **Why** we do it:

Clarifying Questions are about probing to ensure you understood information communicated.

Understanding gives context to the choices we make. A poor understanding leads to poor choices. Patients' safety is our first priority, it is OK for anyone to ask a questions. If you are unsure, or you just want to be sure, ask!

How we do it:

Ask Clarifying Questions and prompt others to ask one or two clarifying questions:

- When in a high-risk, safety-critical situation
- When performing a task for the first time
- When information is incomplete
- When information is not clear

Self-Check using STAR

What it is and **Why** we do it:

Self-checking is a habit of the mind that keeps our attention on task. Self-checking prevents skill-based errors, those unintended slips and lapses when we perform well-known, familiar, routine acts we do on auto-pilot without even thinking.

How we do it:

Stop Pause for one or two seconds

Think About your actions

Act Perform the act

Review Check for right response

When we do it:

Conditions that increase the probability of errors when performing a familiar, routine task:

- Working under time pressure
- Doing multiple things at the same time
- Distractions
- Task complexity
- Interruptions
- Boredom
- Mental or physical exhaustion
- Disorientation

Cross Check

What it is and **Why** we do it:

This strategy is all about helping others and expecting others will help us. We need to watch out for each other.

How we do it:

- Check the accuracy of each other's work.
- Point out when a co-worker is getting ready to make an error.
- Point out unusual situations or hazards to each other.
- Ask for an impromptu consultation when unsure of something.

5:1 Feedback

What it is and **Why** we do it:

We need to support and coach each other as we build new habits. We notice when others are doing things correctly or incorrectly and comment on both situations. The goal of coaching using 5:1 Feedback is to provide two kinds of reinforcement, both positive and negative.

How we do it:

Observe the behaviors of others and provide feedback.

- **Encourage** and praise when others use safe and productive behaviors.
- **Discourage** and correct when others use unsafe and unproductive behaviors.
- Seek to provide positive (encouraging) feedback whenever you see it, at least 5 times more often than negative (discouraging) feedback.

Phonetic and Numeric Clarification

What it is:

Phonetic and numeric clarifications are used to differentiate sound-alike words and numbers to ensure information is heard correctly.

How we do it:

When using **phonetic** clarification – say the name, then spell the name by saying the letter and the phonetic clarification for that letter.

When using **numeric** clarification – say the number and then say the digit.

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| A ALPHA | B BRAVO | C CHARLIE | D DELTA | E ECHO | F FOXTROT |
| G GOLF | H HOTEL | I INDIA | J JULIET | K KILO | L LIMA |
| M MIKE | N NOVEMBER | O OSCAR | P PAPA | Q QUEBEC | R ROMEO |
| S SIERRA | T TANGO | U UNIFORM | V VICTOR | W WHISKEY | X XRAY |
| Y YANKEE | Z ZULU | | | | |

By utilizing these Error Prevention Tools, we live Our Texas Health PromiseSM :

I promise to keep you and me safe.

I promise I will listen and communicate clearly.

I promise to demonstrate and promote teamwork.

