

Our 5th Tone:

Provide Opportunities for Others to Ask Questions

What is a tone?

- Tones are simple communication practices to show respect and create familiarity among team members. Tones increase frequency of communications. Some tones are non-verbal such as smiling and making eye contact. Some tones are verbal – meaning using words. Saying hello is a verbal tone.
- Tones are good basics in maintaining teamwork. Frequent use of tones create an environment of thinking well together as a team.

How do I use this tone?

1. Provide opportunity for others to ask questions by pausing. People naturally fill gaps in the dialogue. If they have a question – they will ask.
2. If you ask for questions – ask *what questions can you answer for them* instead of asking *if they have any questions*.
3. Answer questions honestly and earnestly using a neutral voice.
4. Listen with empathy and intent to understand – another tone – before answering the question(s).

Five (5) tones

Respect at ALL times:

1. Smile and greet others (say hello)
2. Introduce using preferred names* and explain roles.
3. Listen with empathy and with an intent to understand
4. Communicate the positive intent of your actions
5. **Provide opportunities for others to ask questions**

* Usually first names

What more can I do to be my best?

1. Encourage the asking of questions. Here are some tips from *Critical Thinking Promoting Behaviors and Comments*, Rubenfeld & Scheffer, 2006:
 - State - *there is no such thing as a bad question*
 - Reply - *that is an interesting question*
 - Ask - *what do you think?*
2. Listen for signs of *hint and hope*. Team members, patients, and family are not always assertive when voicing concerns.
3. Listen for the safe word – concern – as in I have a concern. This is our tool for speak-up for safety and indicates a team member is trying their best to help us prevent patient harm.
4. Use our tool – peer coaching – to reinforce team members who practice this tone well.
5. Use our peer coaching tool to build better practice habits in team members who do not use this tone well – either by not doing this at all or by being insincere.