Two Minute Tasks – keeping the learning experience relevant and fun.

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During clinical rotations at Liverpool University, the Small Animal Internal Medicine service aims to help students develop key skills relevant to managing internal medicine cases. These include collection of key clinical data through history taking and physical examination, the formulation of problem and resultant differential diagnosis lists along with a diagnostic and therapeutic plan. Additionally we seek to foster the ability to identify key, relevant gaps in knowledge and quickly address these.

Traditionally, prepared work during rotations took the form of one written or spoken presentations often lasting 15-30 minutes during the rotation week. We reasoned that a daily study focussed on case material, presented in a concise, enjoyable format would be well received. To this end, we developed 2-minute tasks.

Students are allocated their presentation during afternoon case rounds. The remit is spend less than thirty minutes researching the challenge and to present the answer in up to two minutes in afternoon rounds the following day. Questions range from direct objective facts through to key underlying physiology, pharmacology or pathology underlying a given condition. A degree of humour is applied to help relax the students who are informed that these do not contribute to formal assessment of the rotation, rather, they are development of practical skills.

A database of these tasks is maintained for use randomly during longer periods of internal medicine rotations (three-week electives).

Focus-group feedback on clinical rotations has regularly highlighted that these tasks are a popular and informative adjunct to this part of the course.