

8<sup>th</sup> October 2024

## Providing Structure – C3 – Chunking

Think about the following questions:

1. What is chunking?
2. When might we use chunking?
3. Why is chunking important?

### From the OET Speaking Assessment Criteria Glossary...

C3	Using organising techniques in explanations	A variety of skills help to organise explanations in a way that leads particularly to increased patient recall and understanding. Skills include: <u>categorisation</u> in which the health professional informs the patient about which categories of information are to be provided <u>labelling</u> in which important points are explicitly labelled by the health professional; this can be achieved by using emphatic phrases or adverb intensifiers <u>chunking in which information is delivered in chunks with clear gaps in between sections before proceeding</u> <u>repetition and summary</u> of important points.
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### Chunking also allows us to meet criteria E2 in ‘Information Giving’:

E2	Pausing periodically when giving information, using the response to guide next steps	This approach, often called <u>chunking and checking</u> , is a vital skill throughout the information-giving phase of the interview. Here, the health professional gives information in <u>small pieces, pausing and checking for understanding</u> before proceeding and <u>being guided by the patient's reactions</u> to see what information is required next. This technique is a vital component of assessing the patient's overall information needs: if you give information in small chunks and give the patient ample opportunity to contribute, <u>they will respond with clear signals about both the amount and type of information they still require.</u>
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### We can use chunking for a range of information giving, such as:

- Explaining a procedure
- Explaining the next steps after the consultation
- Explaining treatment
- Explaining how equipment works

### How would you use chunking in this part of the roleplay?

#### Chunking process:

1. Checking patient's existing knowledge (if necessary) – “Have you heard of ... before?” / “What can you tell me about...?” / “Do you know anything about...?” / “How much do you know about...?”
2. Chunk 1
3. Check patient understanding / feelings
4. Chunk 2
5. Check patient understanding / feelings
6. Etc.
7. “Do you have any questions?” / “Would you like me to repeat anything again?”

- Reassure parent about child's asthma (e.g., manageable, regular monitoring, support available, etc.). Describe asthma management (e.g., identifying and controlling triggers, assessing severity of symptoms, knowing how to respond in urgent situation, informing child's school, etc.).

The following prompts are all taken from the medical professional cards in OET Speaking roleplays.

How would you use chunking?

- Explain how stress can cause symptoms (reduced blood flow to stomach causing cramps, etc.), and how caffeine can play a role (producing adrenaline causing muscles to cramp).
  
- Briefly explain epilepsy (disruption of electrochemical brain activity) and general symptoms (e.g., muscle jerking, sometimes post-seizure tiredness or incontinence, etc.).
- Explain what the parent should do if the daughter has another convulsive seizure at home (e.g., lie on side, remove harmful objects, no objects near mouth, check breathing, etc.).
  
- Provide recommendations for prevention of future attack (diet, relaxation, stress management).
  
- Discuss post-operative recovery (e.g., several weeks to fully recover, swelling/stiffness, may require sling, over-the-counter pain relievers, physiotherapy for exercises, etc.).