

# Your Role in Promoting OT



## **Purpose**

The purpose of these materials is to focus on promoting occupational therapy as a unique profession in a wide variety of settings. All too often we find it difficult to explain what OT is succinctly. We may hear explanations like “it’s like PT but more holistic” or “OTs help you with bathing and dressing,” but we all know OT is so much more than that! After viewing the PowerPoint slideshow with examples of how an OT might describe the profession in different settings, we invite you to review the following discussion questions with your colleagues, friends, and family. It also could be a topic for your next staff meeting.

## **Why it Matters**

Occupational therapy practitioners are often the only professionals promoting meaningful engagement in everyday activities. We take the time to focus on what is most important to our clients. While other professionals focus on specific aspects of a medical condition or disability, occupational therapy practitioners bring attention to each individual’s abilities and provide creative ways to live life to its fullest. If other professionals don’t know what we do, our critical perspective and the future of our profession are at stake.

# Discussion questions



***Ask: Why do you think promoting OT to others is so important?***

***Possible answer:*** To prevent encroachment on our practice area, increase referrals from physicians, improve funding, etc.

***Ask: What can you do to promote OT to others throughout each day?***

***Possible answers:*** Explain what OT is at the start of each session, make sure other professionals know you are an OT practitioner, etc.

***Ask: Who should OT practitioners be promoting OT to? Why?***

***Possible answers:*** Physicians, nurses, speech therapists, clients, etc. Other professionals should know how we can help their clients and be aware of our domain of practice.

***Ask: Why is it so difficult to explain OT in a succinct manner?***

***Possible answers:*** OT practitioners do many different things and work in many settings, so it's difficult to summarize everything we do (but you don't always have to!).

***Ask: What is OT and why is it important in your setting?***

Answers will vary.

***Ask: What does OT bring to the table that is unique?***

***Possible answers:*** A focus on valued occupations and ability. Occupational therapy interventions are based on what the client wants and needs to do, emphasizing ability rather than disability.

## Role Play Activity: The Elevator Speech



The idea behind an elevator speech is to be able to explain what you do in your setting in about a minute—the amount of time that one might have with a stranger in an elevator.

Work in groups of two to come up with the most important things to include in an elevator speech (allow 3 minutes).

Ask one person per pair to present the elevator pitch in 1 minute or less. Consider creating a poster similar to those in the PowerPoint with the winner's words explaining OT in your setting, to hang in your workplace!

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