

# APEX Application Tips- Category 1

## General Information for All Categories

### Understanding the Application:

- Read the application thoroughly – it is very specific and clear.
- There are four different categories based on specific achievements. Most first-time applicants apply for Category 1, but you can start at a higher level if you qualify.
- There are two parts that need to be completed:
  - Required elements: all of these must be met.
  - Elective requirements: you must earn at least 1 point from each focus area category (Service, Education, Performance, Quality, People, and Community). A minimum of 40 points total are required to complete the application.

### Apex Requirements:

- Turn in complete Apex application with Apex Manager Support Form signed by manager within 30 days of annual review date
  - If your review is done before your date, you have 30 days from the review date in Infor. If your review was done after your review date in Infor, you have 30 days from the date your review was done.
  - This will verify that you have not had any corrective action in the application year and that you are employed at least 0.5 FTE.
- You must be in your current role for the designated number of years according to the category level (2 years for Category 1, 3 years for Category 2, etc.).
  - RN to RN role change is accepted (for example NTCU to 4 South department change).
  - Change in job title resets the timeline (such as bedside RN to RN Care Manager).
- Meet minimum education requirements
  - Nursing hire date prior to October 1, 2011 requires ADN as the minimum education. Hire date after October 1, 2011 requires a BSN as the minimum.

### Additional Tips/Suggestions

- Don't wait until the last minute to put it all together. You have the whole year leading up to your review date to work on this. Keep everything in your APEX envelope so you don't have to go searching for it later.
- Apply for elective points beyond the required 40. You may not always receive the full amount of points you expected, so it's nice to have some extra just in case.

- You may hear people talking about “no double dipping” with your points. An example of double dipping would be trying to use the same project to obtain points in two different categories. You can, however, earn points in multiple categories if a large project is broken down into segments.
  - For example: you can get points for attending a peer case review as well earn points for making a practice change based on that case review and receive credit for teaching your peers.
- Don't worry if your application is not accepted the first time. The committee will work with you and give you a deadline to make revisions and turn it back in.

## Category 1- Helpful Hints

### Required Elements:

#### • Service

- This can be proven through a simple resume that includes a short 1-2 sentence description of how long you have worked in your current role or a copy of your employment information from MyHR. You can continue to update your resume and use it in future years for APEX.

#### • Education and Professional Certification

- Provide a copy of your job description (you will get a copy at your review or you can get a copy from your manager). This helps the review team to know what the requirements are for your job. Don't include your performance review.

#### • Performance and Professional Development

- Complete 5 CEUs beyond minimum requirements for licensure/job description.
  - CEUs can be earned at some hospital-sponsored classes, through HealthStream, by attending conferences, through professional organizations, etc.
  - Your documentation must include the CEU hours.
  - If you use HealthStream CEUs, your documentation must include the CEUs. The estimated hours is not the CEUs.

#### • Quality -

- Find a journal article published within the last two years specific to your patient population. Write a paragraph report on it and share with 5 coworkers.
  - Examples of places to present: huddle, leave it in the breakroom, SPT meetings, staff meetings, etc.
  - Designate a space for them to sign their name and date it was presented to them.
  - Provide a copy of the journal article along with your report.

#### • People

- Recognize 5 individual co-workers.
  - This can be done through star awards, you make a difference cards, emails, etc.
  - TIP: Make sure these are dated! Photocopy “You make a difference” for your records.

#### • Community

- Complete four hours of volunteer service AND a written description of how this impacts the health and well-being of the community.
  - There is a list of community service opportunities on the APEX website under “APEX Volunteer Opportunities.” You can also find opportunities in the Daily Dose, through unit-specific charities, or through co-workers.
  - Any non-profit organization counts. TIP: Get proof! Charities, schools, etc. will provide written letters documenting hours.

## **Elective Elements: Tips to Get Your Points**

- The APEX application goes into much more detail about supportive documentation to get points. The following are additional tips and ideas that you may find helpful.

### **Service**

- You can submit “You Make a Difference” cards, emails, Discharge Caller letters, Star Awards, etc. that are addressed to you. Make sure they are dated!
  - TIP: start an APEX folder after your review. Every time you get something that can be used for APEX, put it in the envelope. Now everything is in one place when it comes time to putting it all together at the end of the year.
- Provide an attendance list or the first page of committee minutes listing your name to prove you attended meetings. 50% attendance is required for members and 75% for leaders.

### **Education and Professional Certification**

- Earn more CEUs. These points are in addition to the CEUs you already earned for the required elements.
- You can earn points for certification or specialized training beyond your job requirements (such as BLS instructor or a Super User that required training).

### **Performance and Professional Development**

- Use any additional credentials that are NOT required for your position (i.e. swallow screen, sheath pulling, CVVH/CRRT, ICP, IABP, hypothermia, wound VAC, etc.)
- Find another journal article, book, etc. to write a review and share with your co-workers. You can do something as simple as making a poster and sharing it at a huddle or staff meeting. If you don't have adequate documentation that this was done, you can have a Charge Nurse, ANM, or Manager sign off that you did it and date it.
- Teaching a new skill at a huddle or staff meetings. Once again, make sure someone documents the date in which you presented.

### **Quality**

- You could come up with a cost-saving measure and submit it as a bright idea/quick and easy card. Make sure to date and photocopy the card and then prove that this idea was used on your unit (note from Manager or ANM, copy of the new Standard Work, etc.)
- While validating a checklist for someone (IV starts, new grads, new hires, etc.), photocopy the list in the moment. Then place it in your APEX envelope and have it ready to be submitted. Then place it in your APEX envelope and have it ready to be submitted or include a validators list from your department with a date.
- Lean projects can be used as long as it is in addition to projects required for your role.

### **People**

- Get validation that you let a student job shadow you. They usually have a review form you need to fill out, so make a copy for yourself. Or have your charge nurse that day validate that you worked with a student.
- Write an email recognizing a co-worker or fill out a “You Make a Difference” card.
- TIP: Date everything and make a copy for yourself before you submit it.
- Print out your preceptor class or refresher certificate from HealthStream AND a printed copy of your schedule from Laborworkx showing the dates you worked as a preceptor.

### **Community**

- Volunteer hours are in addition to the 2 required hours you already completed.
- Created by APEX Subcommittee of the Professional Growth and Development Council Revised February 27, 2018
- These hours can be categorized as community based or healthcare based. Make sure to pay attention to this when you submit the points.
- It is best to get documentation from the organization you are volunteering for ie a letter stating your hours, or an email with your schedule, etc.
- Donating blood counts for 2 hours of volunteer time.