

# APEX Application Tips- Category 2

## 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:

Application must be submitted within 30 days of the Adjusted Hire Date. If APEX has been received previously, it is due within 30 days of their last submission annually.

- Must be employed at least 0.5 FTE
- A performance review with no improvements needed for the prior twelve months.
- Must be employed in one of the qualified job codes (listed below) for at least two years within the last four years at the time of your next performance review. To obtain your current job description, ask your manager.
- The application year can start after one year of employment in the qualifying position with the goal of applying on the two-year anniversary.
- A new application must be submitted each year, based on new professional activities and achievements over the past twelve months of work.

### 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 2- 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.
- You will need to have the next level of education in your role from minimum qualifications or a National Certification relevant to your current role.
  - 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. Submit a copy of your diploma to show your degree.
  - For a certification, you need to submit a copy of the documents confirming professional certification, including date of granting and expiration.

#### • Performance and Professional Development

- Complete 10 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

- You must present a case study relevant to your specialty or attend a conference and bring information back to your colleagues.
  - A case study can include a professional published case study (such as from a journal) or a real life patient scenario that additional education could improve patient outcomes in your specialty. You need to include documentation of the date and time that this information was presented, as well as a copy of the case study itself (if relevant).
  - After attending a conference relevant to your patient population, you will present information learned and how it relates to the population you serve. You will need to provide a brochure from the conference and evidence that you shared your findings (e.g. agenda, staff meeting minutes, manager signature, list of signatures you presented to, etc).

## People

- Recognize 10 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.
- Serve as a mentor, peer consultant, or resource on five different occasions (each needs to be completed on a different day).
  - This could be completed directly on your unit or when given the opportunity to go to a different unit. Examples could include educating a new staff member on how to use a piece of equipment, sharing a new skill with colleagues, sharing a skill when floating to a different department, one-on-one mentoring with a new staff member, bringing back education from a committee (i.e. falls, skin team, etc.), teaching new skills to students, etc.
  - Proof can either be written up by the person receiving the assistance or by the applicant themselves. Make sure to include the date.

## 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 put 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 member 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 requires 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 on 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.).

### **Quality**

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- 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 or include a validator's 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.
  - 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.

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- Created by APEX Subcommittee of the Professional Growth and Development Council Revised February 27, 2018
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