Foundational articles about healthcare debriefing

- Classic article about how to facilitate a debriefing.

- Comprehensive review article about healthcare debriefing; represents a good starting point for an overview.

- Excellent overview of general facilitation techniques that highlights strategies tailored to degree of learner engagement (low, intermediate, and high).

- Classic article about reflective practice in healthcare debriefing that presents three fundamental notions: (a) frames or mental models drive behavior; (b) genuine curiosity on the part of the debriefer/educator promotes exploration of learners' perspectives of simulated events during a debriefing; and (c) the communication strategy of “advocacy-inquiry” whereby simulation educators share their point of view and assumptions during the debriefing and then solicit the learners' perspectives.

- This article looks at debriefing as a formative assessment, namely as an assessment strategy for learning (as opposed to high stakes summative assessment, or assessment of learning). Outlines the notion of performance gaps—namely areas of performance that are good or in need of improvement—that can help guide lines of questioning in a debriefing.

- This paper outlines key elements of scenario design and implementation, namely planning for and responding to unexpected learner actions during simulation events. Although this paper does not relate directly to debriefing, in my view it is a must read since how simulation educators deal with unexpected learner responses during the simulation will have a subsequent impact on the debriefing.

- The authors provide an easy to follow discussion that links phases of the debriefing to applicable learning theories such as Kolb’s experiential learning cycle.
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- High-yield article that builds on Dieckmann’s “simulation setting model” and enhances the empiric basis for it. Specifically, Dieckmann et al. use his simulation setting model to place debriefing within the larger context of the simulation event to highlight the interrelated elements of simulation-based learning environments.


- Introduces a novel blended approach to debriefing that integrates approaches such as learner self-assessment, focused facilitation strategies, and providing information in the form of directive feedback and/or teaching.


- Provides guidance on managing co-debriefing, including proactive and reactive strategies

**Research on debriefing effectiveness**


- Important early work in healthcare debriefing that provides empiric evidence that post-simulation debriefing is a critical element of simulation based learning. Of note, the authors found that the addition of video-review did not offer advantages over feedback alone.


- This article explores that value of instructor-lead vs. self-debriefing for nontechnical skills in simulated crises. The authors found that for nontechnical skills, individual self-debriefing lead to similar learning outcomes as did instructor-lead debriefing.


- This explores the value of instructor-led vs. within-team debriefing for team performance of simulated crisis scenarios. Within-team debriefing may be as effective as instructor-led debriefing. The authors propose that this may improve resource utilization.

- This rigorous multi-center study explored the benefit of scripted debriefing for novice instructors. When novice instructors used a debriefing script, learner groups had better learning outcomes in simulated pediatric advanced life support scenarios.


- This high-yield article explores whether team and individual debriefs enhance performance. This meta-analysis shows that organizations can expect a 20-25% improvement in individual and team performance if debriefings are properly conducted.


- This systematic review and meta-analysis of debriefing for technology-enhanced simulation, which included 177 studies, sought to characterize how debriefing is reported in the literature and explore features that are associated with improved learning outcomes.


- Systematic review of the effectiveness of healthcare debriefing included 10 randomized controlled trials.

**Assessing debriefing quality**


- Provides an overview of the *Debriefing Assessment for Simulation in Healthcare,* both development and psychometric properties. The DASH is a 6 item behaviorally-anchored rating scale that outlines behaviors that promote debriefing effectiveness.


- This paper reports on the development and validation of the *Objective Structured Assessment of Debriefing* in surgical contexts. Outlines effective debriefing behaviors in eight categories.
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Debriefing in Clinical Practice

- This study examines the feasibility of post-resuscitation debriefing in pediatric emergency settings through implementation of an in-situ debriefing tool. The debriefing tool focuses on what worked well and what could have gone better during the care of the patient. The post-resuscitation debriefing approach integrates the 12 tips for debriefing medical teams outlined by Salas et al. (see next reference)

- A high-yield article by leading experts that outlines 12 evidence based suggestions for debriefing medical teams.

- SHARP Tool: Outlines a simple debriefing strategy for performance improvement in clinical practice
  - Set learning objectives
  - How did it go?
  - Address concerns
  - Review learning points
  - Plan ahead

- This work underscores the potential of post-resuscitation debriefing in clinical practice.

- Overview of debriefing in clinical practice in emergency setting

For those with greater time and interest…

- The TeamGAINS model of debriefing is likely not for beginners. The innovation in this well-referenced article is the integration of more advanced strategies into a larger debriefing model, including systemic constructivist methods taken from family therapy approaches—including circular question—and guided team self-reflection.

- This interesting article discusses the potential cultural differences that educators should take into account when debriefing. Key dimensions explored here include: power distance, notions of individualism vs. collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity-femininity. The key messages in this paper are particularly helpful for educators working in non-Western cultures and raises questions to guide future research.