

**CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM**  
**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

The primary responsibilities of the entry level physical therapist include the multiple facets of the role of clinical practitioner. In addition, the therapist must have skills in management/administration, teaching, and consulting. While pursuing these multiple roles, the physical therapist must attempt to achieve maximum benefit from a minimum investment of time and resources. The following list of "Essential Functions" incorporates activities that a student must be able to perform in order to successfully complete the professional program in Physical Therapy. A student must be able to perform all of the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

1. **Intellectual/conceptual. Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** The applicant/student must be able to measure, calculate, recall information, comprehend, reason, apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate. Specifically, the applicant/student must be able use these qualities to problem solve and think critically in an appropriate timeframe and in context.  
**Problem Solving:** The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.  
**Critical Thinking:** The ability to question logically, to identify, generate, and evaluate elements of logical argument; to recognize and differentiate facts, illusions, assumptions; and to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.
2. **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** The applicant/student must possess the emotional health to fully use his/her intellectual abilities. He/she must also demonstrate appropriate motivation for the physical therapy profession. Required behaviors include professionalism, responsibility, commitment to learning, stress management and skill in interpersonal relations.  
**Professionalism:** The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively. (including the American Physical Therapy Association's Core Values)  
**Responsibility:** The ability to fulfill commitments and to be accountable for actions and outcomes.  
**Commitment to Learning:** The ability to self-assess, self-correct, and self-direct; to identify needs and sources for own learning; and to continually seek knowledge.  
**Stress Management:** The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop effective coping behaviors.  
**Interpersonal Skills:** The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other health professionals, and the community, and to deal effectively with cultural and ethnic diversity issues.  
**Effective Use of Time and Resources:** The ability to manage time and resources effectively to obtain the maximum possible benefit.
3. **Observation Abilities:** The applicant/student must be able to participate fully in all classroom activities, lectures, demonstrations, laboratory exercises, and clinical education experiences within the professional program. He/she must be able to assess and comprehend the condition of all patients/clients assigned for examination, diagnosis and intervention. Such observation and information gathering requires the functional use of vision, hearing and somatic sensations.
4. **Communication Abilities:** The applicant/student must be able to communicate effectively both receptively and expressively with varied audiences and for multiple purposes. Communication skills include listening, speaking, body language, reading, writing and the observation skills noted above. In addition, effective communication involves the ability to seek out, use and provide constructive feedback for improving personal and therapeutic interactions.
5. **Motor Abilities:** The applicant/student must perform basic tests, diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. The student must be able to move about the environment throughout the duration of the typical day, move in and out of varied sized work spaces, move from one floor to another, and move onto different levels and surfaces. Typical movements in the clinic may include: standing, walking, bending, stooping, squatting, kneeling, pushing and pulling. The student must be able to safely assist patients/clients through performing lifting and carrying activities. The student must also be able to effectively manipulate smaller objects.