The Diagnostic Ledger

Use one entry per study error. A learning aid, not an exam outcome guarantee. Fill locally or print; no email or account is required.

Entry title / track / topic / date / source or page

1. The Mistake

Answer picked and my reasoning

Emotional state (optional; keep private or omit before sharing)

2. The Source Evidence

Question and given facts

Source/page: evidence supporting or contradicting my answer

Assumption added or information overlooked

Study material only. No patient identifiers or confidential case details.

Repair, retry, revisit

3. The Structural Repair

Trap: correlation as cause / reversed condition / ignored unit / unsupported recall / other

Corrected principle and reasoning step I will change

Next-time rule: Before I conclude ..., I will check ...

Fresh retry question and answer without notes

How I checked the answer

4. Revisit

Review date / decision / reason: revisit, explain unaided, or apply to a new example

- [ ] I can name the assumption or missed evidence.
- [ ] I can explain the corrected reasoning without notes.
- [ ] I can apply the reasoning to a fresh example.

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Fictional worked example

Optional revision guide and quiz scores

Undergraduate foundations / interpreting study evidence. Original constructed example, not a real study.

The Source Evidence

In a fictional class, students who chose a new revision guide scored higher on a later quiz than students who did not. No random assignment or earlier quiz scores were reported. Does this prove the guide caused the higher scores?

The Mistake

Answer picked: Yes. Reasoning: The guide users scored higher, so the guide must have caused the difference. Optional fictional emotional state: rushed and confident; keep private or omit before sharing.

Assumption I added

I assumed the groups were comparable beforehand. Motivation, prior knowledge or study time could differ; these possibilities were not measured.

The Structural Repair

Trap: correlation as cause. The result is an association, not proof of a causal effect. It also does not prove the guide has no effect; the causal question remains unresolved.

Next-time rule

Before making a causal claim, check how groups were formed, what was measured and which alternative explanations remain.

Fresh retry and answer

A fictional club reports that optional review-session attendees earned higher scores. Are the sessions proven effective? No: self-selection and unreported starting differences remain possible explanations.

Check and revisit

Compare with the stated facts and the association-versus-causation distinction in assigned course materials. Review after a gap. Revisit if unclear; move on when you can explain it unaided and apply it to a fresh example.

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