Residency Interview Webinar
September 2019
OSPD
Scheduling Interviews

• Try to avoid interviewing at your top choice programs until you have completed at least one interview
  • Nervous and less confident early on so use programs in which you are not as interested in to improve your skills

• No consensus if better to interview early or late in season
  • Early because programs are fresh and excited about meeting applicants
  • Late so you’ll be more memorable
  • Control what you can control

• Remember: Program Coordinator organizes the interview schedule and is closest to the Program Director – be nice!
Residency Interview Structure

• No one-size-fits-all structure for interview
  • Different sites will have different processes
  • Most programs will provide advance information on how the interview process will work (presentations, Q&A)
• Students are strongly encouraged to:
  • Research the program where you will interview
  • Learn about the structure of the interview: what to wear, what questions to expect, who makes up the interview committee, etc.
  • Remember that much of what you get out of your interviews depend on your attitude toward the process and what you seek to accomplish through the experience
  • Make the most out of what’s likely to be the one and only opportunity to actually see and experience what the program is like
Interview Day Common Activities

- Pre- (or post-) interview dinners or other social activities with residents
- Orientation to institution and residency
- Tour of patient care and educational areas
- Opportunity to participate on rounds
- Interviews with staff, residents or both
- Exit interview with someone from program leadership
Preparing for the Interview

• Familiarize yourself with **common interview questions**
  • Tell me about yourself?
  • How do you handle stress?
  • Why did you apply to this program?
  • What’s your greatest weakness?

• Research the program
  • Go beyond the website homepage
  • Are they known for research/new technology?

• Create method to track/rate programs
  – NRMP’s PRISM App
  – AAMC’s Residency Program Evaluation Guide
Preparing for the Interview

• Proper mindset is key
  • Happy, confident and excited to be in the interview conversation, but not desperate to get the job
  • Mutual opportunity for you and the program to see if it’s a good fit -- not there to impress or please anyone
  • Role play common questions with a friend/family member
    • Familiarize yourself with the answers, but don’t memorize them
    • Aim for a natural, relaxed delivery

• Identify most impressive/important character traits and why
  • Use character traits to answer difficult questions
Tell Me About Yourself

- Include something interesting/unique about yourself
- Opportunity to show why you should be selected
- Avoid restating exact info from personal statement/CV
- 2-3 minutes (not too short, not too long)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Something memorable about yourself +</th>
<th>Skillset//experience you possess that will add value to their program +</th>
<th>Why you’re a good fit for their program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where are you from</td>
<td>Exposure to variety of cases and treatments</td>
<td>Train and practice in your home state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you study in undergrad and why</td>
<td>Diverse patient populations</td>
<td>Interested in what program is known for:</td>
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<tr>
<td>What inspired you to study medicine</td>
<td>Research/previous work experiences</td>
<td>research-intensive vs community-based or</td>
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<td>Interesting experiences outside of medicine</td>
<td>Proficiency in ACGME core competencies</td>
<td>teaching philosophy toward residents</td>
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# Tell Me About Yourself

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<tr>
<td>My name is Jane Doe, and I come from a family of physicians so medicine has been a part of my life for a long time. My mother is a pediatrician ...</td>
<td>AUC’s clinical program provided me with exposure to a diverse patient population where I was able to see a variety of cases and treatments. I love working with patients and thrive in a team environment.</td>
<td>I’m from the area and my goal has always to positively impact the community in which I grew up. The small size and family atmosphere are important to me, and I feel I would thrive if offered a position here.</td>
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</tbody>
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## Difficult Questions

- Identify most impressive/important character traits and why
  - Trustworthy, quick learner, good judgement, team player, open to constructive criticism
  - Use traits to show what you learned or how you persevered in a situation that didn’t result in a favorable outcome
  - Always end on a positive note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explain the situation without making excuses and take ownership +</th>
<th>Character trait that allowed you to overcome adversity +</th>
<th>What was the result</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wasn’t used to studying in a group setting prior to med school. As a result, I became overwhelmed with the amount of information and failed two courses.</td>
<td>I’ve always prided myself on my ability to quickly and accurately identify issues and to seek out feedback for continued improvement.</td>
<td>I did not fail any additional courses and went on to post a competitive Step 1 scores for Internal Medicine. It was a great learning experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role Play With Common Interview Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Why did you become a doctor?</td>
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<td>• How would your friends describe you?</td>
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<td>• What are your strengths and weaknesses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Why are you interested in our program?</td>
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<td>• What are you looking for in a program?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Why should we choose you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can you tell me about this deficiency on your record?</td>
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<td>• If you could not be a physician, what career would you choose?</td>
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<td>• What do you do in your spare time?</td>
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<td>• What is your most important accomplishment?</td>
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<td>• What motivates you?</td>
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<td>• What problems will our specialty face in the next 5-10 years?</td>
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<td>• How well do you take criticism?</td>
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Questions for the Program

• Thoroughly research the program so you can ask informed questions
• Be ready for the interviewer to reverse roles and ask you to interview them
• Not asking questions shows lack of interest
• Don’t Forget to Ask: Advice from Residents on What to Ask During the Residency Interview by AAMC
Thank You Letter

• Send to Program Director and anyone else who you spent enough time where you made a connection
• Send within 48 hours of completing the interview
• Handwritten letters are best; type out and sign if penmanship is not legible
• Cards are ok to send too; choose a minimal design
• You can ask the best way to send the letters (some programs may have a preference)
• Potential topics: what you saw, who you met, good experiences you had
Dress for Success

• Dark suit (black, gray or navy)
• Minimal jewelry
• Avoid strong cologne or perfume
• Men: button-down shirt and tie with comfortable, polished shoes
• Women: pants or skirt with a flat or conservative heel
• SMILE!

Mitchell Clark, MD ('12)
Gynecological Fellow at University of Toronto
Ob/Gyn at Yale University/Bridgeport Hospital
Resources

- **Ask the Experts: Mastering the Residency Interview** by ECFMG
- **The US Residency Interview Process, Volume 2** by ECFMG
- **Residency Interview Tips from a Chief Resident** by KevinMD
- **Preparing for Residency Interview** by the American College of Physicians
- **Iserson’s Getting into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students** by Kenneth V. Iserson
Contact

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