CRUSHING THE RESIDENCY INTERVIEW

Presented by: Carol Langford, Beyond Words Consulting, Inc.
TODAY’S PURPOSE

Create messages that help you articulate your strengths and experiences that will differentiate you as a residency program candidate during the interview.

Provide some tips and insight on how to communicate your message in a confident manner.
WEBINAR AGENDA

• Use the Message Builder process for creating listener focused, clear and concise messages for residency interviews

• Review difficult interview questions

• Overview key communication skills that impact one’s confidence and credibility

• Provide additional information to help students prepare for residency interviews
LETS GET STARTED!
TOPIC

YOU are the topic.

• What kind of person are you?
• What do you want to accomplish?
• Why did you go to medical school?
• What skills and experience will make you successful in this residency program?
• How will you fit in?
LISTENERS

• Residency program directors, faculty members, and residents for each program

• What do these groups of people care about?
UNDERSTAND YOUR LISTENERS

1. How much do they know about you?
2. How do they feel about you? About AUC?
3. How interested are they in you?
4. How will your interview impact them?
5. What apprehensions or objections could they have about selecting you?
6. Are there any past perceptions about you or your training that you should take into consideration when creating your message/presentation?
7. What do you want them to think about you when you leave the interview?
The goal is to paint a positive and memorable picture of you!
FIRST IMPRESSION

• Perception is reality – make a great first impression

• Be prepared and start strong with the first potential question:
  “Tell me about yourself…”

• Don’t “um, ah, well and like” your way through it
OPENING: TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF?
Goal is to paint a positive and MEMORABLE picture of you.

Who are you?
I grew up...
+ Interesting tidbit
I studied _____ in college at _____

Why medicine?
I became interested in medicine...
I went to medical school at AUC...

Why specialty?
I became interested in this specialty...
+ Story to tell
OPENING: WHAT WAS THE MOST DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE FOR YOU DURING MEDICAL SCHOOL?

EXAMPLE OR EXPERIENCE:

I had a hard time when a patient died unexpectedly after a surgery.

A family member walked up to the room during the code – I was the only one not intensely involved in the resuscitation. I took the initiative to work with the family member.

I relied heavily on my communication skills to diffuse the anger and relay what was happening. Those minutes felt like years until a very skilled nurse took over for me. I learned a lot by watching her interact with the family member.

STRENGTH POINT:

STRENGTH: I am a self-starter

STRENGTH: Strong communicator/team player
HOW DO YOU RANK IN YOUR CLASS?

Although I haven’t reached all of my goals academically, I feel that my recent clinical performance shows that I can handle adversity and make adjustments to perform at the expected level.

I had some difficulty in basic sciences, but I believe it was a great learning experience and it taught me some valuable skills such as taking constructive criticism and using it to identify and problem solve the issue.

I have honored more than half of my core clerkships.

EXAMPLE OR EXPERIENCE:

STRENGTH POINT:

STRENGTH: I learn from my mistakes

STRENGTH: Strong communicator/team player
WHY DID YOU CHOOSE AUC?

EXAMPLE OR EXPERIENCE:

It was very competitive when I was applying to medical school. After not gaining admission into a US school, I explored international medical schools as an alternative.

I chose AUC because of its high match rate (89% in 2016) and US clinical training sites. I was impressed with the fact that AUC graduates match into the same programs and specialties as US seniors and are eligible for licensure in all 50 states.

I also had the opportunity to train at school-affiliated sites in the United Kingdom. The small number of students in my clerkship allowed me to receive hands-on training experiences that I feel I may not have otherwise received.

STRENGTH POINT:

STRENGTH:
I have a sincere passion to become a physician and I’m determined to reach my goal.

STRENGTH:
My international experiences make me a unique applicant.
OPENING: CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT A MISTAKE YOU MADE AND WHAT YOU DID ABOUT IT?

EXAMPLE OR EXPERIENCE:

I made a mistake in reporting a patient’s lab results back to the team.

There was a good chance this would be of no consequence, but I felt it was important to bring the mistake to the attention of my resident. So I did – and got reamed out.

STRENGTH POINT:

STRENGTH: Trustworthy in difficult situations.

STRENGTH: Transparency in communication.
COMMON DIFFICULT QUESTIONS

- Why did you choose this specialty?
- Why are you interested in this program?
- What are your goals?
- Tell me about yourself?
- What did you do before medicine? (To an older student)
- Why should we pick you?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Are you interested in academic or in clinical medicine?
- What was the most interesting case that you have been involved in?
- Present a case that you handled during medical school.
- Do you plan to do a fellowship?
- What could you offer this program?
- How do you rank in your class?
- What issues do you see managing a professional and a personal life?
- How have you prepared yourself for the rigors of residency?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- Why did you choose AUC?
OPENING: CHOOSE YOUR QUESTION

EXAMPLE OR EXPERIENCE:

STRENGTH POINT:

STRENGTH:
What questions do you have for them?

**What would you ask the interview committee?**

One reason I am interested in your program is the potential for international experiences, can you tell me more about those opportunities?

One of the things I enjoyed during clinical rotations was working on a quality improvement project – are their opportunities as a resident to be involved in similar projects here?

**Reinforce your strengths and experience**

**Strength:** I have international experience.

**Strength:** Problem-solver, self-starter.
THE CLOSE!

- It’s critical to close with confidence
- Use your FAB!
  
  The FAB lays the foundation for your closing statement
Feeling: How do you feel about the residency program you are interviewing for? Your feeling is your belief or opinion.

Are you enthusiastic, excited or believe this is the best program for you?

Stating how you feel gives conviction to your message. It establishes a tone and enhances your credibility.
**Action**

**Action:** What do you want your listeners to do?

When you state the action, be direct about wanting to join their program and say this with conviction. “It would be a privilege...”
Benefits: What’s in it for them if your listeners rank you in their program?

Come up with 2-3 benefits for them accepting you into their residency program.
CLOSING STATEMENT:
Start with a summary statement and close with your FAB.

Convey your feeling
How do you feel about joining their program? Be specific and succinct.

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I particularly enjoyed xxx and believe this program is xxx...

State your action
Be direct and state your action with confidence.

I would truly appreciate the opportunity to join your program.

Reinforce the benefits
Reinforce the benefits for them having you join their program.

I believe your program is a good match for me because: (be specific and make connections between your strengths and the program).
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION: FOCUS SKILLS

POSTURE

PAUSE

EYE CONTACT
RESIDENCY INTERVIEW

• 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 someone from program leadership
RESOURCES

• Ask the Experts: Mastering the Residency Interview
  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 INFORMATION

Students with additional questions about the Residency Interview can contact AUC School of Medicine’s Office of Student and Professional Development (OSPD) at:

ospd@ aucmed.edu

305-446-0600, option 6