STEPS AFTER APPLICATION PROCESS

Importance of USMLE Scores

Residency programs use USMLE scores to filter at the very start of the process, hence it is very important to own the best USMLE scores. Competitive programs want both steps passed on 1st attempt & hence just passing will not give you the competitive edge.

The Residency Match Process

Each year, programs submit the number of positions that they wish to have filled through the National Residency Matching Program (NRMP). ERAS receives documents from the applicant, the ECFMG, U.S. medical schools, and the USMLE. These documents are formatted, scanned, and assembled into individual applicant packets, and are electronically sent to as many programs as the applicant chooses. Programs evaluate applications and determine which applicants they want to interview during November, December, and January.

Residency Interview Process

Preparing for Residency Interviews

Since the majority of residency programs receive many more applications than they have interview slots, receiving an invitation to interview means that you have survived the first round of eliminations.

You Have A Residency Interview. What Next?

Learn as much as you can about the program so that you arrive prepared to ask thoughtful and specific questions. This demonstrates your interest and helps you evaluate one program against another once you've completed all your interviews. You'll receive information from the program; but you should also look at the electronic residency database (FRIEDA) and any websites for the program or its affiliated hospitals.

How Are Residency Interviews Used?

Residency programs use the interview process as a way to get to know you firsthand rather than through written materials. They are interested in your motivation for medicine and for their specialty, in your communication skills and personality, in your self-confidence and your ability to handle the interview. They hope to glean insights about your level of determination, reliability, integrity, and how you might respond to criticisms and the stresses of training. They also try to weigh how you might fit in with their current residents and staff. For IMG candidates, they are especially interested in your English language skills and your understanding of the residency training process.

A Glimpse to a few sample questions asked during the Residency Interview.

Medical Residency Typical Interview Questions

- We have many good applicants. Why should we choose you?
- Why did you choose to apply to this program?
- What would you like to know about our program?
- What do you feel you could add to our program?
- What have you learned about yourself from previous jobs?
- How do I know you can show initiative and are willing to work?
- What are your interests outside of medicine?
- What would you say are your major strengths? Weaknesses?
- Why did you choose this specialty?
- Tell me about your medical education.
- Tell me about your previous clinical experience in (specialty name).
- Why are you so sure (specialty) is right for you?
- Tell me about your experience with the USMLE exam(s)? (if candidate has so-so score(s) or failed attempts)
- Have you ever worked in an ICU (or other unit common to the specialty)?
- Have you ever worked in an American hospital? Tell me about that experience.
- How do you get along with nurses?
- Have you ever taught medical students?
- Do you have any publications?
- Are you interested in research activity? Please elaborate.
- Have you ever made any presentations before a professional group?
- Have you assisted in surgery? On what procedures? Tell me how you were involved.
- What are your long term goals?
- Tell me about yourself.
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?
- What are you looking for in a training program?
- Do you have any questions about our program?
- What books have you read lately? Tell me about (book, article).
- Do you plan to practice in (program's area or state)?
- Tell me about the latest treatment for XXXX (a common disease treated by the specialty). (This is often called "pumping an applicant" and is not as common as it once was.)
- How would you describe your decision-making style?
- Describe the most difficult decision you have ever had to make. How did you go about it?
- Describe the worst or most disappointing clinical experience you've had so far.
- What will you do if you don't match in (specialty)?
- To what other (programs or specialty areas) have you applied?
- What is your visa status?
- Describe a difficult time in your life and how you dealt with it.
- Do you have any beliefs or convictions that might interfere with your willingness to deal with the kind of clinical situations you are likely to be presented with in residency training? (Usually asked if program director fears religious beliefs may prevent applicant from performing abortions, birth control, etc.)
- What do you do to cope with stress?
- Have you taken any CME courses? If not, why not? (asked to measure applicant's initiative in seeking exposure to US-style of health care delivery)
- Have you held any leadership roles? Elaborate.
- What factors would lead you to rank a program very highly?
- What factors would lead you to lower your ranking of a program?
- What kind of personality traits do you find most difficult to deal with in co-workers?
- What challenges do you foresee that will potentially affect this specialty in the next ten years?
- What kind of patient do you find it most difficult to relate to? What tactics would you use to establish optimal rapport with such a patient?

The Rank Order List

After interviews, the programs list applicants by preference (rank order list). Simultaneously, applicants submit a list of programs in rank order. Applicants are electronically matched to the highest-ranked program on their list that has offered a position to that applicant.

Students who have not matched are usually informed the day before match results are announced. Students and their schools begin "SOAP" (Supplemental offer and acceptance program) to find unfilled residency training positions.