

Residency Interview Guide

So you're about to head off on your first interview. A little nervous, are we? Not to worry, we're here to help!

First, remember some of the personal and professional traits they are looking for: Enthusiasm, motivation, initiative, communication skills, chemistry, energy, determination, confidence, humility, reliability, honesty, integrity, pride, dedication, analytical skills, and listening skills.

Next, think of some of the questions that they might ask you - we've given you a head start by listing over a hundred questions you might hear on your interview, so click on the link below to download the list.

Now, what questions are you going to ask them? We've helped you out there too. Click on the links below to download the lists.

There you go - you're all set to impress!

Be sure to check out some of the other interview resources we have on our medical student home page...and good luck!

[Questions They Will Ask You](#)

[Questions to Ask Residents](#)

[Questions to Ask Faculty](#)

[Questions to Ask the Program Director](#)

QUESTIONS THEY WILL ASK YOU

1. List three accomplishments of which you are most proud of and what each accomplishment indicates about you?
2. List three abilities you have that will make you valuable as a resident in this specialty?
3. What clinical experience have you had in this specialty?
4. Do you have any questions?
5. Tell me about yourself?
6. What three adjectives best describe you?
7. What might give me a better picture of you than I can get from your resume?
8. Tell me a story about yourself that best describes you?
9. If you were going to die in 5 minutes, what would you tell someone about yourself?
10. Of which accomplishments are you most proud?
11. Are there any hidden achievements or qualities that you are secretly proud of?
12. How have you changed since high school?
13. What are your strengths and weaknesses?
14. Tell me about your "secret identity" - The part of your personality that you don't share with strangers?
15. Any skeletons in your closet you want to tell me about?
16. How well do you take criticism?
17. What's your pet peeve?
18. If you could change one thing about your personality what would it be?
19. If you could be any cell in the human body, which would you be and why?
20. Do you see yourself as more relaxed/casual/informal or more serious/dedicated/committed?

21. Which is more important, the ability to organize, structure, and prioritize or to be flexible, modify, change and make do as needed?
22. Which is more important, knowledge or imagination?
23. Strangest Halloween costume you ever wore?
24. What do you value in your own life?
25. If you had unlimited money and (x amount of time) what would you do?
26. 3 wishes, what would they be?
27. What kinds of people are your friends?
28. Describe your best friend?
29. How are you similar and dissimilar to your best friend?
30. How would your friends or co-workers describe you?
31. Who are your heroes?
32. What is your favorite movie, book?
33. What is the last book you read?
34. What do success and failure mean to you?
35. What do you do in your spare time?
36. Favorite games/sports? Why?
37. Have you done any volunteer work?
38. How did you choose these outside activities?
39. If you had a completely free day, what would you do?
40. Describe for me your typical day?
41. What is the most bizarre thing you have ever done (in college, high school, etc)?
42. What is the most unusual occurrence in your life in the past (x amount of time)?
43. Which organizations do you belong to?
44. What are your plans for a family?
45. If could not be a physician, what career would you choose?
46. Why choose to be a doctor?
47. How do you make important decisions?
48. Are you a risk taker or safety minded?
49. What made you choose your undergraduate major?
50. How did you select undergraduate college and medical school?
51. What were the major deficiencies in your medical school training? How would you plan to remedy this?
52. If you could begin your schooling again, what would you change?
53. Have you ever dropped a class, why?
54. Have you ever quit or been fired from a job?
55. Biggest failures in life and what have you done to ensure that they won't happen again?
56. Have you always done the best work of which you are capable?
57. Which types of people do you have problems working with?
58. What qualities drive you crazy in colleagues?
59. Describe the best/worst attending with whom you have ever worked?
60. Do you prefer to work under supervision or on your own?
61. With which patients do you have trouble dealing?
62. How do you normally handle conflict?
63. How do you respond when you have problems with someone?
64. What do you do if someone senior tells you to do something you know is wrong?
65. With what subject/rotation did you have the most difficulty?
66. Why do you want to go into EM?
67. What would you be willing to sacrifice to become an emergency physician?
68. What is the greatest sacrifice you have already made to get to where you are?

69. If EM did not exist, what would you do?
70. How much did lifestyle considerations fit into your choice of specialty?
71. Why did you apply to this program?
72. What qualities are you looking for in a program?
73. What interests you most about this program?
74. What have you heard about our program that you don't like?
75. Are you applying here because it is a familiar environment?
76. What will be the toughest aspect of this specialty for you?
77. How will you handle the least interesting or least pleasant parts of this specialty's practice?
78. What qualities are most important in this specialty?
79. What kind of qualities does a person need to be an effective emergency physician?
80. Why should we take you over other applicants?
81. What can you add to our program?
82. What computer experience do you have?
83. Describe your ideal residency program?
84. What is your energy level like?
85. How many hours of sleep do you require each night?
86. How well do you function under pressure?
87. How do you handle stress?
88. Can you handle stress without the resources you are accustomed to relying on?
89. Tell me about the patient from who you learned the most?
90. Most memorable experience in medical school/college?
91. What errors have you made in patient care?
92. Greatest fear about practicing medicine?
93. Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
94. How do you see the delivery of health care evolving in the 21st century?
95. Is health care a right or a privilege?
96. What problems will our specialty face in the next 5-10 years?
97. What would you do if the house staff had a strike?
98. What do you think of what's happening in mid east? Congress? Economy?
99. Teach me something non-medical in 5 minutes?
100. Where else have you interviewed?
101. What if you don't match?
102. Can you think of anything else you would like to add?
103. How do you deal/cope with failure, give example?
104. What was your favorite course in medical school?
105. Describe a conflict you had with someone and how it was resolved?
106. Describe something that was very difficult in your life, how you dealt with it, and what you learned from it?
107. What needs to be changed in our health care system?
108. How can you do your job more effectively?
109. What is the most pressing problem in medicine today?
110. What is the most rewarding thing you have ever done?
111. Tell me some of your successes?
112. Tell me some of your failures?
113. How do you show your commitment to medicine?
114. Who is the most influential in your life?
115. What is the worst thing that has ever happened to you?
116. What do you do for fun?
117. When did you decide you wanted to be a physician?

118. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
119. What leadership roles have you held?
120. What are the biggest problems in medicine and EM?
121. What do you think of socialized medicine?
122. Do you know how hard residency is?
123. Do you want research to be a part of your career?
124. What is your most important accomplishment?
125. What makes you different from everyone else?
126. What do you expect out of EM?
127. What is your most important lesson learned from childhood?
128. What do you expect will be the hardest part of residency for you?
129. Who in your family are you closest to?
130. What makes you happy?
131. What makes you sad?
132. What makes you unique?
133. Is there anything else not in application that you want to tell me?
134. How do your friends describe you?
135. 3 people you would invite to dinner and why?
136. Describe important relationships you have had with people?
137. Anything else you want to tell me about yourself?
138. What was your most difficult challenge in life?
139. Why do you want to come here?
140. What are some challenges that will face this specialty?
141. What motivates you?
142. Why are you here?

QUESTIONS FOR RESIDENTS

1. What contact will I have with faculty and how often?
2. What is the faculty ED coverage? (Single, double, triple?)
3. What is the faculty per hour per patient ratio?
4. How often do you want faculty input but find it's unavailable?
5. Who teaches - senior resident, attending, both? Do you feel you have the opportunity to teach as a senior resident?
6. How much didactic time is there? How much time is spent in lectures, seminars, journal clubs?
7. What has higher priority: Attending conference or clinical duties?
8. What are the types of clinical experiences I can expect?
9. Are there struggles between services for procedures?
10. Is it difficult to obtain consults from other services?
11. Are you boarding lots of patients in the ED?
12. Have graduates felt comfortable performing all necessary procedures by the time they graduate?
13. What type of ultrasound and hyperbaric experience is there?
14. Will I have time to read?
15. What type of support staff is available? Who starts IV, blood draws, clerical work, takes patient to

x-ray? How often do you wheel patients to X-Ray?

16. What is the call schedule? Is it home call or hospital call?

17. What is the patient population like? (Indigent, insured, HIV, penetrating/blunt trauma?)

18. Do the residents go out as a group? Are the events for all residents or just those in the program?

19. How often do social events occur? Any activities of special interest to residents?

20. Are the majority of residents here married or single, any with kids?

21. Where do people live?

22. Is parking a problem?

23. What if there is a problem, will the program stand up for the resident?

24. How are shifts done? What is their length? Advance from days to evenings to nights? Time off?

25. Are there any away electives? Where?

26. Is there research time? How much and what is required?

27. What are the weaknesses of the program and how are they being improved?

28. What is the one thing you would improve at this program if you could?

29. Are you happy here?

QUESTIONS FOR THE FACULTY

1. What types of non-clinical responsibilities are there? (Research, projects, writing, administrative)

2. What research projects are the faculty and residents currently working on? How is funding

obtained? Who gets first authorship?

3. Is there time to do research? If you need to present at a national conference, will the department

pay for your way there?

4. Is there training in administrative and legal aspects? Is there hands-on experience dealing with

insurance, billing, contracts, hiring?

5. What are the population demographics? (Indigent, insured, etc)

6. Who does airway management and who does it in trauma? Does anesthesia come down?

7. Is there conference time? Is it protected time?

8. What is the pediatrics exposure and experience?

9. What is the underlying philosophy of the program? What is the mission statement for the program?

10. Are there any required/provided certifications? (ACLS, ATLS, PALS/APLS)

11. Are there any skills labs?

12. How are procedures recorded and credentialed?

QUESTIONS FOR THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

1. Where are your graduates? Geographic areas? Academic vs. community?

2. How have your graduates done on the board exam? Did all pass on the first time? How did they

do on oral exams?

3. How have residents done on in-service exams?
4. Any new faculty coming on? Any leaving?
5. Type of resident evaluations? How often? How is feedback supplied to residents?
6. What changes if any do you anticipate in the program's curriculum? Why?
7. Have any residents left the program? Did they enter the same field elsewhere? Why did they leave?
8. Do you help graduates find jobs? How do you accomplish this - counseling sessions, faculty contacts? Will faculty review job offers with residents?
9. What are the weaknesses of this program and how are they being improved?
10. What are the strengths of this program?
11. I am very interested in your program, what else can I do as an applicant?
12. What can I expect from you as a resident in your program?
13. What do you expect from me as a resident in your program?
14. What are your future plans and how long do you intend to stay here?
15. How are faculty chosen? What are their strengths, weaknesses, interests?
16. What is your accreditation status?
17. Has the program ever been on probation? If so, why?
18. How often are you reviewed by the RRC and when is the next review?
19. Do you support resident involvement in national associations?
20. How many national conferences do residents get to attend and when?
21. Does the program pay dues to ACEP/EMRA/SAEM?
22. What processes are in place to deal with issues for residents?
23. What is their policy on maternity/paternity leave?
24. How are the residents treated by the ancillary staff?