

The Virtual Interview



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The University of Arizona
College of Medicine – Phoenix
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Evening Agenda

- 5:30pm – 5:50pm PowerPoint
 - Dr. David Guttman
- 5:50pm – 6:00pm Introductions
 - Dr. Shah-Patel
- 6:00pm – 6:55pm Panel Discussion
 - Dr. Andrea Waxman (Psychiatry)
 - Dr. Jennifer Preston (General Surgery)
 - Dr. Steven Brown (Family Medicine)
 - Dr. Dan Gridley (Radiology)
 - Dr. Mary Connell (Radiology)
 - Dr. Vasu Bhavaraju (Pediatrics)
- 7:00pm – 8:10pm 1:1 Interviews
 - All students and faculty volunteers (you will automatically be moved into individual breakout rooms)
- 8:10pm – 8:30pm Student & Advisor Debrief
 - All students and Career Advisors present. (Faculty excused)

Virtual Interview

- AAMC Statement 2020
 - Encourages interviews conducted virtually
 - Phone or video conferencing
- Transition
 - Many residency programs in all specialties are moving from in-person interviews to virtual ones

Preparation

- Take control of the environment
 - Scheduling
 - Hardware & Software
 - Location
 - Lighting
 - Noise
 - Attire

Preparation

- Scheduling
 - Date & time of interview
 - Time zone considerations therefore need to confirm
 - Expected length of interview
 - You should not be booking multiple interviews from different locations on the same day

Preparation

- Verify software or application platform
 - Download most update version
 - Verify username requirements
 - Create professional username
 - Verify profile photo requirements
 - Create professional look
 - Test & familiarize
 - Log in
 - Microphone & video camera
 - Reliable internet connection
 - Backup device
 - Device fully charged or plug available

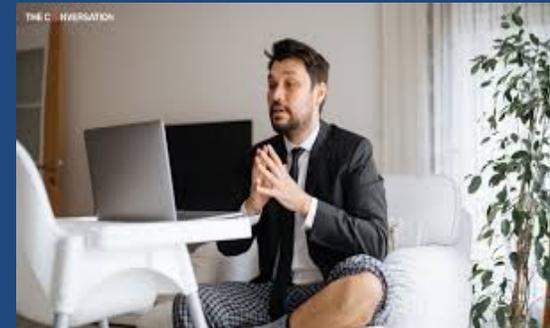
Preparation

- Location
 - Free of distraction and interruptions
 - Background conservative and tidy
- Lighting
 - Eliminate shadows and properly illuminate
 - Light from above and in front of you
- Noise/Echoes
 - Avoid distracting noises in your environment
 - Children, pets, roommates, etc.
 - Large rooms may create echoes



Preparation

- Eye contact
 - Webcam should be at eye level; maintain eye contact at that location
- Body language
 - sit up straight
 - hand motions
 - swivel chair
- Attire
 - Professional dress
 - Head to toe
 - Avoid busy prints or patterns that wash out on video
 - Solid and brighter colors appear best on screen
 - Avoid flashy jewelry and reflective eyewear



Preparation

- Know yourself
 - Be comfortable telling your own story
 - Know your application
 - Why you chose your specialty
 - Qualities and skills you bring
 - Expectations, educational and professional goals

Preparation

- Do your homework
 - The more informed you are, the more insightful the questions you can ask during the interview
 - Research programs using their website, contacts, and pre-interview materials
 - Know the history of your specialty
 - Pioneers in the field
 - Be knowledgeable of current events

Preparation

- If the program has sent you information prior to interview day, make sure you look at it
- Research those who will be interviewing you if you have this information
- Keep record of who these individuals are, contact information, and who program coordinator is
 - (after your fifth interview this will all blend together)

Preparation

- Prepare to answer common questions
 - You'll impress interviewers if thoughtful, insightful, and concise responses roll off your tongue
 - "Tell me about yourself"
 - "Why do you want to go into this specialty?"
 - "Why do you want to come to our program?"

Preparation

- Prepare a patient case or two
 - Particularly memorable, challenging or educational
 - If asked, present the patient in about 30s – 45s
 - Relate the highlights
 - Conclude with what you learned

Preparation

- Practice, practice, practice
 - Rehearse with a friend, mentor and your Advisor
 - Practice on same device and in same location
 - Record the video and review yourself or send to someone for feedback
 - Listen to your tone, pace and volume
 - Are you smiling?
 - Do you focus on the camera with good eye contact?
 - Are you fidgeting?
 - How is the video and audio quality?
 - Is your face well illuminated?
 - Is the background distracting?

Preparation

- Prepare a list of questions
 - Develop questions that will help you collect the information you need to make a good decision
 - Make sure these questions are appropriate for who you are asking
 - Don't ask the PD questions about vacation
 - Ask the residents about didactic time, family time etc.
 - Interviewers may defer the direction of the interview to you; take the reins with confidence

The Interview Day

- Check your equipment
 - Test internet connection
 - Close any additional open applications
 - Silence notifications
 - Disable pop-ups
 - Turn off phone
 - Log in 20 minutes beforehand

The Interview Day

- Make good eye contact
 - Imagine the interviewer is sitting right behind the camera
- Body language
 - Sit up straight
 - Pay attention to posture
 - Demonstrate interest and enthusiasm
 - Smile and project warm and confident demeanor
- Speaking
 - Allow for time to interviewer to finish their question
 - Speak louder and articulate more than usual; ask interviewer if they can hear you appropriately

The Interview Day



5 TOP ONLINE INTERVIEW TIPS

Make an Impression from a Distance



Look directly into the camera and not at the screen or monitor to make good eye contact



Don't be afraid to ask for a question to be repeated if you have not heard it properly. It is better to clarify



The sound system can be less than perfect so speak clearly and avoid mumbling or rushing your words



Be aware of your facial expressions and posture - they are a large part of your message online



Pause before answering a question to be sure the interviewer has finished speaking



The Interview Day

- Commonly asked questions by Program Directors:
 - How did you become interested in our program?
 - What are you looking for in a program?
 - Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
 - Tell me about yourself.
 - What are your strengths and weaknesses?
 - What do you do with your spare time?
 - Tell me about your research.
 - Why should we take you over other candidates?
 - What are you looking for in a program?
 - Why did you choose medicine as a career?
 - What have you been doing recently during this time of the pandemic?

The Interview Day

- Good questions for students to ask PD/faculty:
 - Where do graduates end up: geographically and types of jobs?
 - What program changes have been made in recent years?
 - What changes are anticipated in the near future?
 - What are some of the major research interests within the department?
 - What role do private physicians have in the residency training process?
 - What role do fellows have in the residency training process?
 - What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the program?
 - How percentage of time is devoted to lectures and other didactics?
 - How do your graduates do on specialty board exams?
 - What percent of residents go on to fellowships? Which fellowships
 - Do residents have any difficulty landing the fellowship of their choice?
 - What has kept you at this institution/program?

The Interview Day

- Good questions for students to ask residents:
 - What is the best part of your residency?
 - Are you happy with your decision to come here?
 - Tell me about the lectures, simulations, didactics, journal club.
 - Other requirements: research, administrative, built in moonlighting, etc?
 - What is the most frustrating part of your residency?
 - Do you operate with attendings on every case?
 - How is call? How much call?
 - How is the cost of living?
 - Electives experience? Can you do away electives?
 - Inpatient versus outpatient experiences?

The Interview Day

- Address weaknesses in your application and what you learned from it
 - Control the conversation
 - Low board scores
 - Leave of absence
 - Delayed graduation
 - and then highlight your strengths
 - Showcase your clinical problem-solving abilities
 - Talk about a particularly meaningful patient interaction

The Interview Day

- At the conclusion of the interview
 - Concisely reiterate interest and your fit
 - Thank the interviewer
 - Properly close and exit out of software

After the Interview

- Keeping everything straight
 - Notes pros & cons, your interviewers, *feelings, etc.*
 - Be honest with yourself and what you like and don't like
 - Is this a place where you will thrive?
 - Write about common/personal things you talked about with PDs/interviewers
 - Great to have when doing thank you notes and jog interviewers memory of you
- Consider using Residency Program Evaluation Guide
 - <https://www.aamc.org/cim/download/338984/data/evaluationguide.pdf>

Summary

- Prepare your technology, environment, questions and interview skills
- Be comfortable telling your story
- Smile and demonstrate enthusiasm
- Remember, you're interviewing the program too
 - Which program is the best fit for you?
 - Where will you thrive?

Resources

- AAMC Virtual Interviews: Applicant Preparation Guide
 - https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2020-05/Virtual_Interview_Tips_for_Applicants_05072020_1.pdf
- AAMC Best Practices: Conducting Residency Program Interviews
 - <https://www.aamc.org/system/files/2020-05/best%20practices%20for%20conducting%20residency%20program%20interviews.pdf>
- www.aamc.org/download/77936/data/residencyquestions.pdf
- <https://www.aamc.org/cim/residency/application/interviewing/>