

Tips & Tricks for Virtual Interviews



"Spotlights-helpful processes in an increasingly competitive environment"
 Presented by:
 Lars Beattie, M.D., M.S.,
 FACEP Residency Program
 Director, Clinical Associate
 Professor



"Beyond the Awkward Q&A: Interactive Activities to Improve Engagement"
 Presented by:
 Jacqueline A. Hobbs, MD, PhD,
 DFAPA, CMQ
 Associate Professor and Vice
 Chair for Education Director,
 Residency Training Program
 Department of Psychiatry



"Do's and don'ts" for virtual interviews"
 Presented by:
 Timothy W. Martin, MD,
 MBA, FASA
 Professor and Associate
 Chair for Education
 Anesthesiology Residency
 Program Director
 Chief, Division of Pediatric
 Anesthesia



"Best Practices Tips"
 Presented by:
 Tasha Graham, MBA, C-TAGME
 GME Project Manager



"About me presentation-requirement for the applicants"
 Presented by:
 Megan McCann, C-TAGME
 Dermatology Residency
 Coordinator

The Virtual Interview— “Do’s and Don’t’s”

- Our present reality
- Is an official, “formal” interview
- Dress and prepare yourself appropriately, as if you were conducting a “live, in-person” interview
- Know the planned “flow” and timeline for all sessions with candidates
- Present yourself professionally
- Consider and minimize or eliminate background “noise,” distractions

Identify a Suitable Environment and Technology

- Stable internet connection; back-up plan (phone numbers) in case tech fails
- Computer or tablet with a good webcam and microphone recommended over mobile phone
 - Check internet speed (SpeedTest.net); Wi-Fi vs. wired Ethernet connection
 - Camera and mic test in advance (positioning, quality)
 - Sit straight, head and shoulders positioned center of screen
 - Look into camera
- Device should not accept phone calls, reminders during interview; close all other apps or programs
- Device fully charged or plugged in
- Private, quiet, well-lit space free of distractions
 - Office vs. home or other private locations
 - Light source in front of you, rather than behind you
 - Background noise sources (other office staff, telephones; if at home—family members, pets, construction or yard services)
 - Remove distracting clutter, objects in background; use of “green screen” ideal

The Virtual Interview— “Do’s and Don’t’s”

- Focus, listen, and clearly articulate questions for candidates and responses to candidate questions—work to avoid “talking over”
- Take notes during interview/encounter
- Conduct or participate in debriefing as soon as possible following interview day
- Follow-through on any commitments or any unresolved questions from applicants—e.g., a “promise” to look something up or provide further information regarding some resource
- Coordinate with or copy PD and education office admin staff any communications with applicants

Types of Interview Questions

- Be prepared and coordinate with other members of interview team
- General questions
 - Seek to have candidates describe themselves broadly in various (legal) domains
- Behavioral Questions
 - Seek to have candidates describe previous experiences to demonstrate their level of knowledge and skills
- Situational Questions
 - Seek to have candidates demonstrate their level of knowledge and skill by describing what they should or would do in different hypothetical, possible situations

Examples of Behavioral Interview Questions/Prompts

- Describe a stressful clinical situation and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a time when your academic or training performance did not meet your expectations.
- Tell me about a time when you received difficult or less than positive feedback from a supervisor or rater. Respond? Changes?
- Describe a situation when you (and perhaps others) felt a member of your team was not working or performing as expected. How did you handle?
- What personal qualities do you feel are important to be a successful resident? Which do you possess?
- Describe how you demonstrate professionalism in your activities.
- Tell me about a time or situation when you worked with peers or customers/clients who had come from a different background than you.

Example of a Situational Interview Question

- Imagine you are a resident on the “nightfloat” team and are working with an upper-level (more senior) resident in the care of a complex patient. You witness what you believe is a medication error where the upper level resident administered the wrong medication, but seemed to have falsified the anesthesia record. What would you do?

“Do’s”--NRMP Match Communication Code of Conduct

- “To promote the highest ethical standards during the interview, ranking, and matching process, program directors...shall commit to:
 - Respecting an applicants right to privacy and confidentiality
 - Accepting responsibility for recruitment team members
 - Refraining from asking illegal or coercive questions
 - Declining to require second visits or visiting rotations
 - Discouraging unnecessary post-interview communication

(nrmp.org)

“Don’t’s”--NRMP MATCH Violations

- NRMP Match Violations by Interviewers

- Request applicants to reveal names, specialties, geographic locations, or other identifying information about other programs to which they have or may apply
- Request applicants to reveal ranking preferences
- Suggest to or inform an applicant that placement on a rank order list is contingent upon submission of a verbal or written statement indicating the applicant’s interest
- Make verbal or written contract with applicant for appointment to a concurrent year residency prior to the release of the List of Unfilled Programs

- NRMP Match Violations by Applicants

- Suggest to or inform a program that placement on a rank order list is contingent upon submission of a verbal or written statement indicating the program’s preference
- Make any verbal or written contract with a program for appointment to a concurrent year residency prior to release of the List of Unfilled Programs

(nrmp.org)

“Don’t’s”--Examples of Illegal Interview Questions

- Are you married? Are you planning on getting married in the future?
- Are you planning to have children or start a family during residency?
- How do you plan to manage your roles of wife/mother/resident or husband/father/resident if you train here?
- How does your spouse feel about moving here?
- Tell me about your sexual activities/orientation/preferences.
- Do you have any physical or mental disabilities?
- How old are you? Why are you considering a residency at your age?
- What religion do you practice?
- What would you trade or exchange for a spot with us?
- Do you think I should give you special consideration as a minority applicant?

“Do’s and Don’t’s” Summary

- Find appropriate setting for video interview
- Optimize technology set-up beforehand
- Test technology before the interview
- Practice videoconferencing interviewing skills if not already experienced
- Be prepared with coordinated (* any suggested structure or question type from PD) questions for candidates—especially behavioral and situational
- Dress and conduct professionally, as if conducting an in-person interview
- Stick to legitimately useful questions that are reasonably tied to applicant’s potential capacity to function as a resident physician in your program
- Avoid commenting on background decorations, furnishings, or artifacts in candidates’ backgrounds
- Contact program (your education office staff) immediately if tech issues arise during interview – have phone numbers handy