

Residency Positions – How to Apply & Other Tips

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Your Curriculum Vitae

- **Concise but organized/systematic.**
- **No chronological gaps!!**
- **Include awards, distinctions, grants, honors, etc.**
- **Use references in the USA/Canada, addresses, tel. nos., fax, e-mail address, etc.**
- **Include publications to refereed journals/research work.**
- **USMLE/FLEX examinations scores.**

Where & How to Apply

- Use the **FREIDA – AMA's Graduate Medical Education Directory**.
- Many Residency Programs advertise through the web or have web sites!!
- Credentials must be complete before applying!!.
- Apply electronically and don't use the fax number.
- Fill up all questions in the application form.
- Weak programs claim University affiliations!!

Where & How to Apply

- Don't apply to “crowded” specialty or discipline!
- “Crowded” – OB-Gyn, ER, subspecialty in surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics, etc.
- “Non-Crowded” – Family medicine, pathology, anesthesiology, psychiatry, etc.
- If you insist on the “crowded” specialties or disciplines, apply to non-university programs first, i.e., city-county hospitals with high indigent patients load & “loosely” affiliated programs, etc.

Letters of Recommendation

- Be very certain that they are positive!!
- Referees of world renown reputation.
- Referees who know all your strengths.
- Brief and direct to the point (No anamnesis, please!!).
- Mention your publications/collaborative works (mentors, preceptors, supervisors).
- Awards, distinctions, honors, grants, etc.
- Official academic title of the referees.
- Letters from residents, medical students, former patients/benefactors, etc.

Reporting for Interview

- Be on time or even 30 minutes earlier.
- Practice reporting to the location 24 hrs. before.
- Speak slowly & clearly.
- If you know your interviewer, read some of his/her previous articles, publications, etc.
- Answer questions direct to the point.
- Your interviewer's time is very important!!
- There will be a group & also individual interviews.

Reporting for Interview

- If you are late or can't make it, please call.
- **“It is very hard to determine a “good doctor” from a 30 minutes interview”!!**
- Sell yourself but don't **oversell!!**
- Try to be expeditious! Don't waste your interviewer's time!!
- If you don't know the answer to a medical question, say it or “I am not sure but....”.
- Remember, the interviewer knows more than you or is an expert in his/her field!
- Ask about research, evaluation tools, promotion guidelines, variety of cases, etc.

Reporting for Interview

- For females, dress in business suit, dark in color. Wear high heels & skirt. Pant suit is alright if it is modest in style.
- Groom yourself very well & please don't use strong or offensive perfumes.
- For males, use dark business suit, dark socks & pressed shirt. No earrings, oversize chokers, tongue/belly rings & funk haircuts. **Dress like a doctor!!**
- Modesty & being presentable is a virtue of a successful & confident physician.

Reporting for Interview

- **Brief Departmental Orientation –**
 - **History of the department.**
 - **Goals & objectives.**
 - **Training program policies & philosophy.**
 - **Faculty composition & accomplishments.**
 - **Roles of affiliations, electives & specific strengths of main & affiliated hospitals.**
 - **Brief tour of the city or locality.**
 - **Evaluation processes & promotions.**
 - **Areas of research & investigative opportunities for residents/fellows.**

Reporting for Interview

- **Questions to ask the interviewer –**
 - **Types or variety of diseases/pathologies & patient mixes (indigent, private, etc.).**
 - **Types of supervision on regular office hours, after office hours & on-call.**
 - **Can you participate in research or join or collaborate with their researchers aside from doing independent research?**
 - **How about the didactics? Frequency? Can you participate or present cases? Opportunities to attend other conferences in the consortium or elsewhere.**
 - **Detailed description of their evaluation process.**

Reporting for Interview

- Inspect their wards, clinics, call rooms, library, research lab., etc.
- Talk to their residents about the strengths, weaknesses & areas that need improvement.
- Attend, listen & participate in their didactic if they have one that day.
- Look at the eyes of you interviewer. Be attentive & be relevant & pertinent at all times.
- Tell the Program Director you will rank their program very high & praise them!!!
- You should impress the **Chairman/Program Director & also the Chairman of the Residency Selection Committee (if different)!!!**

After the Interview & the NIRMP

- Send a “thank you” letter/card.
- Praise their program again!!
- All ERAS applications are electronic including letters of references.
- All credentials **must meet the deadlines!**
- The after NIRMP “scramble” is only for domestic medical school graduates!!
- Most unmatched positions will be filled up with domestic medical graduates first!!
- If you are matched, “**Congratulations!**”

If You Are Unmatched

- Join the scramble immediately!!
- Mail/send your credentials electronically or by priority/overnight mail but not by fax!!
- Re-apply for the following year & keep your file/credentials there active.
- If you took the USMLE several times, report only your best/highest scores.
- Most program directors have USMLE score cut-off – 85% or higher for IMGs.
- Remember the “pecking order”!!

The Pecking Order!!

- US & Canadian medical school graduates.
- Above applicants transferring from another program or discipline. i.e., surgery to medicine.
- Graduate of US osteopathic schools.
- U.S. citizen IMGs.
- English speaking IMG from English speaking countries – British Isles, Australia, New Zealand, etc. (Usually “caucasian”).
- IMGs from English speaking countries – Philippines, India, Pakistan, etc.
- IMGs from non-English speaking countries.

The Chairman is Always Right!!

- Remember the Departmental Rules, as follows:

Rule No 1. – The Chairman is always right!!

Rule No. 2. – If you have any other questions or dissatisfactions, please refer back to Rule No. 1!!!