



**Resiyay**  
Mock Interview

# US Residency Interview Tips

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[Website](#)  
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# SOAP Suggested Questions

1. Why do you think you're having to soap / what do you think went wrong in the regular match / what was missing from your app?
2. Since you submitted eras, what have you been doing?
3. Tell me about yourself
4. I see that you applied xyz specialty, and now you are here applying xyz specialty.... why / what about your background will help you in xyz specialty / why should we choose you over somebody else who applied to xyz 1 specialty to begin with
5. What do you do to relieve stress?
6. Are you a team player?
7. What is your proudest moment?



# Letter of Interest

- Caution: Avoid sending LOI if programs specifically do not encourage this
- Provide a brief explanation of interest
- Long emails are not encouraged
- The following example is a template
  - Utilize it to understand the content of a letter of interest
  - Provide a brief explanation of interest

# Letters of Interest

- Caution: Avoid sending LOI if programs specifically do not encourage this
- Simple Format (for IM)
  - **Greeting:** Good Morning Dr. XYZ or Dear (Program Coordinator's name),
  - **Paragraph 1:** I hope my email finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to reiterate my strong interest in *[Program Name Speciality]* Residency Program. Currently, I am a *[state position]* at *[institution]*, and interested in an opportunity to pursue my career at *[Program Name]*. I am a *[punctual, ambitious, and committed professional - the attributes that distinguishes me from my peers.]*
  - **Paragraph 2:** My credentials are:
    - Step 1 -
    - Step 2 CK -
    - USCE -
    - ECFMG Certification - Yes
    - Publications -
    - Visa Status -
  - **Paragraph 3:** What distinguishes *[Program Name Speciality]* Residency Program for me is the fact that residents are supported with a rigorous academic platform in a friendly environment. Apart from the work-life balance, flexible schedule and supportive staff, I am specially drawn by the in-house *[list attributes you admire]* that this institution offers. Importantly, I have special ties with *[Place/City/State of the program]* and consider it a place near to my heart. After a successful match, I plan to settle here and practice medicine.
  - **Paragraph 4:** I believe my energy for growth, enthusiasm for *[certain aspect]*, and clinical experience of more than *[x years]* backed up with leadership qualities, makes me a desired candidate for *[Program Name Speciality]* Residency Program.
  - **Closing remarks:** Thank you for your time and consideration.
  - Best regards,
    - Your Name
    - AAMC ID #
- As this is a template, focus on personalizing and adding unique qualities and attributes





# Virtual Interview Set Up

- Video call a friend prior to starting interview
- Join 5-10 minutes prior
  - Time Zone: Confirm and set reminders
  - Camera: Confirm if eye level is with camera or screen
  - Lighting: Check for glares, blurry spots
  - Internet: Have backup ready and PC's contact
  - Background: Plain or a few meaningful pieces

For More Tips on Setup: [Interview Prep](#)



# Answer length

- Maximum: 2-3 minutes
  - Exception: You are asked to elaborate further
- At the end of a question
  - (If appropriate) present your answer and tie in how that quality makes you a competent resident for the program





# General

- Match enthusiasm of interviewer
  - Be professional and welcoming in all interactions
- Presentation
  - Utilize conservative colors (black, blue, gray, etc)
  - Smile when appropriate
  - Avoid yawning, frowning, leaning back excessively
- For any personality traits or strengths - related question
  - Illustrate how it adds to your life
  - What it will contribute to program
- When asked to describe a case
  - Present in vignette form “35 yo F came to the clinic with...”
  - During interview (especially with Faculty and the PD)
    - Present a case if there is ample time
    - This reflects your ability to effectively present information



# Addressing Red Flags

- Avoid
  - Complaining or making excuses
  - Ex: Achieved low step 2 score due to excessive workload as an intern/student
- Address it maturely
  - 1. Take responsibility
  - 2. Describe
    - Utilize STAR method in a modified format
      - State the situation (failed step, gap years, etc)
      - Talk about your role during that situation (student, intern, attending, etc)
      - Describe what you learned from that red flag
      - Emphasize how that red flag added to your positive qualities and the measures you will take to avoid a repeat
  - Highlight what you have accomplished after that red flag
    - This demonstrates you have learned and improved from that difficult situation



# Tell Me About Yourself

- One possible technique is to organize the answer in 3 parts
- Part 1
  - Talk about your origin: where you grew up/home country, family
- Part 2
  - Talk about your hobbies
  - Ideally 1-2 hobbies - why you enjoy them and how they add to your life
    - This is an opportunity to show your strengths in the form of hobbies “I enjoy hiking because it allows me to adapt to new challenges; I will face new territories in residency and will draw upon my experience to successfully adapt”
- Part 3
  - Talk about your journey to medicine and what you are doing currently



# Strengths

- Strengths/Why choose you/What can you bring to the program/What did you learn from previous jobs
  - Self starter/Self motivator
  - Do not require external motivation to start
  - Highlight leadership skills
  - Mention the diversity you bring
  - Emphasize what makes you stand out “I would like you to know...”
- Avoid: work well under pressure
  - Indirectly implies you only do well under pressure



# Weaknesses

- Reflect on a quality you have been told about from friends/colleagues/attendings
- Present the trait or weakness
  - Describe why it was/is a weakness
  - Describe what you have done to overcome it or what you are doing if you currently possess it
  - Emphasize what you have learned from that weakness
- This question is an opportunity to express both maturity in your thought process and self reflection



# Behavioral

HIPAA! Emphasize if it is unethical, it is wrong

## Patient

- Ensure patient safety & care was not compromised
- Check documentation
- Speak with colleague

## Colleague

- Ensure patient safety
- Speak with colleague and ask to self report
- Report if colleague does not



# Plans for Fellowship as an incoming intern

- Utilize your best judgment according to your speciality
- Prepare a genuine explanation for chosen fellowship
  - Simply stating interest without reasoning would reflect lack of preparation
- Internal Medicine
  - Emphasize your focus on becoming a competent physician
  - If you are interested in a fellowship
    - Confirm the program offers that or graduated residents have pursued fellowship
    - It would not be ideal if your focus is on a subspeciality and the program you are interviewing at does not support that



# Resolve Conflict

- Avoid involving a third individual/party
- Reflect maturity by stating conflict is imminent/inevitable
- Demonstrate the ability to openly communicate
  - Invite the other individual to an informal conversation
  - Open the door to communication
  - Focus on a goal of resolution
- Ex: Conflict with co-worker (Utilize STAR technique)
  - State the situation
  - Describe your task briefly
  - Mention the action taken
  - Highlight the resolution
  - Emphasize how you will continue to use this tactic for future conflicts





# Why this Program

- Pay attention to program strengths on website or brochures
- Highlight Academics
  - The program graduates competent and empathetic clinicians
- Highlight Personal Ties
  - Family
  - Senior Residents
  - Visited before
- Emphasize Location
  - Mention any family or ties to area
  - Can mention you are single and willing to relocate easily
- Other Factors
  - Research
  - Teaching opportunity - Medical/PA/NP/Pharm students
  - Continuity clinic and community outreach
- For More Information <https://biginterviewmedical.com/residency-interviews-why-this-program/17>



# Why this Speciality

- Emphasize growth
  - Growth over years of development (vs impulsive)
  - “I channeled my passion through volunteering....”
- Express how you feel practicing this in the future
- Express how this will add to your personal goals
  - Primary Care, Fellowship, Free clinic, Research, etc



# Mention something not in your CV

- This is an opportunity to highlight strengths
  - Ideally state a personal quality and elaborate on how that adds to your life



# Research

- Mention why you like Research
- Briefly mention research title
- If asked - elaborate on details
- If asked repeatedly - present beyond 2-3 min rules
  - This could be the case if the interviewer has similar interests



# Don't Do

- Do not mention negative qualities about yourself or school or speciality or home country
  - US vs home country
    - Highlight the attractive points of US residency
    - Draw from impression during first USCE or most memorable USCE
- Red flags
  - If asked: describe situation, take responsibility, emphasize what you learned



## Don't Do (cont'd)

- Do not ask faculty or PD
  - How many weekend calls/night shifts/ICU unless it is not available on program website
  - This information is readily available on websites
- Do not ask
  - Faculty/Resident/PD to vouch for you **during the interview** if you are from the same institution/country
  - Remain professional



# How to formulate Questions

- Observe website for program highlights
  - Inquire about the highlights in a question format
- Observe introductory material sent prior to interview
  - Ask about new additions to the program and how they have affected the program
- Observe overview presentation/video during the interview
  - Ask about particular aspects incorporated in the video “I learned about the new continuity clinic, could you please help me understand the role of interns in running that initiative?”
- Inquire about genuine interests
  - Procedures and Simulation labs
  - Educational material/support for Step 3 and Speciality Boards
  - Away rotations



# Questions for PD

- Inquire about
  - Any particular elective of interest on the schedule
  - Goals for incoming residents

For More Tips: [Interview Prep](#)





# Questions for Faculty

Inquire about

- Teaching interests of faculty
- Qualities of an ideal resident
- Education
  - Is there an orientation program for incoming residents?
  - Is there a formal didactic curriculum, and what is its structure? *Confirm not already present on website*
  - What are the informal learning opportunities (i.e., bedside rounds, etc.)?
  - What programs exist for resident education (e.g., lectures, journal clubs, grand rounds, board review courses, etc.)?
  - Is there a feedback structure that allows for the resident to evaluate the program's curriculum?
  - Is attendance at regional and national conferences encouraged? Is it funded, and, if so, to what degree?
  - Are there any required rotations that take place outside of the city?
  - Are there opportunities to do "away" rotations?
  - Is there a formal mentoring program for new residents, and do faculty serve as mentors?
- Clinical Duties
  - What provisions are made for back-up call or sick-call coverage?
  - What type of structure for supervision is in place?
  - How does the resident's autonomy change as they progresses through the program?
  - What type of ancillary support is available (phlebotomy, respiratory therapy, social workers, etc.)?
  - Does the general volume of clinical responsibility support a balance between service and education?



# Questions for Faculty (Cont'd)

- Employment
  - Is parking a concern for residents at your program?
  - Are meals paid for when on call?
  - What is your family leave policy?
  - Is there reimbursement for educational supplies and books?
  - Are moonlighting opportunities available? What are the rules for moonlighting?
  - How are residents represented at the institution level? How is the resident member of Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) selected?
- Program Performance
  - Are there any plans for changing the program size or structure?
  - How committed is your institution to resident education and graduate medical education in general? How is this evidenced?
  - What percent of your residents complete your program?
  - What percent of your graduates pass the specialty boards on their first attempt?
  - Where do your graduates go (e.g., fellowship, academics, private practice)?

# Questions for Residents

Inquire about

- Program culture
- Resident Performance
  - How often are residents evaluated?
  - What is the structure of the evaluation (forms, face-to-face, etc.)?
  - What other forms of feedback does the resident receive (in-training exam, etc.)?
  - What support structures are in place for residents in academic need?
- Clinical Experiences
  - What is the EMR?
  - How is the nursing staff/support?
  - How often do you get to see your own patients? How does resident autonomy change through the PGY years?
  - Is there good variety of pathology?
  - What is the ratio of residents/attendings?
  - Is the clinic located close to / at the hospital?
- Night Shifts: Often the most daunting & thrilling experience as a new intern
  - How was your experience on nights?
  - Am I responsible for cross-cover, admissions, both?
  - Is there support from upper-level seniors/attendings?



# Questions for Residents (Cont'd)

- Vacation:
  - How many vacation weeks?
  - Are you able to break up vacation days or have to take at a week at a time?
  - Is there vacation during the holidays (Christmas/New Years)?
  - What is the maximum time I can take off at once?
  - What blocks can I take vacation?
- Relationship with fellows (if present):
  - How often do residents interact with fellows?
  - Do a lot of residents stay for fellowship?
  - Is there mentorship from fellows during residency?
  - Are there shared research opportunities?
  - Do you have any fellowship interests?
- Local activities
- Any favorite aspects of the program from their perspective
- Housing or rent costs



# Post-Interview Thank You Email

- Individual letters to each interviewer
- Define your appreciation for having the opportunity to interview
- Emphasize that you thoroughly enjoyed the visit and offer your availability for any further questions or information they may wish to have
- In a low key fashion
  - State that you will remain hopeful that they found your interview to their liking and would look forward to serving as a future resident at their institution
  - “I hope you will consider me favorably for your program”
- What to avoid
  - Additional explanation of questions conducted in IV



# In Person Visits

- Demonstrates further interest
- Schedule with PC shortly after interview
  - Only encouraged if you genuinely intend to commit to the visit
- Generally would include visit with PD and Chief residents
- Mention name of faculty (if any) who you would like to **particularly** visit with during the tour



Practice and Perfect!

Resiyay Free Mock Interviews

For Updates

