

Interviewing Skills and Techniques

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Interviewing Skills

Keys to success

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Disclosures

- Neither Dr Donoghue nor Dr Flicker have any financial disclosures relevant to this presentation.

Objectives

- Review literature relevant to interviewing as a tool to predict applicant success in resident education
- Explain why interviewing is critical to medical education program development
- Discuss structured models of interviewing that may lead to more success in selecting applicants

Audience Poll

- What is your role in interviewing?
 - Medical students
 - Residents
 - Staff
 - other

What are we looking for?



Non-cognitive skills

- Interpersonal skills
- Communication skills
- Maturity
- Interest in the program or in the field



What's EQ?

- Ability to identify and manage one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others.
- Four realms
 - Social awareness
 - Self-awareness
 - Relationship management
 - Self-management





Challenges with Typical Interviews

- Poor validity and reliability
- Bias - conscious and unconscious
- “Halo effect” of other factors
- Applicants rehearsing, too prepared
- Unstructured interviews can leave applicants uninformed



But what about the applicant?

- Interact with program director
- Interact with residents
- Explore the area/facility



Is it worth it?

- Applicants spend \$2,500 to \$10,000
 - Survey of plastic surgery residents
- Programs spend approximately \$9,900 to recruit one PGY1 resident
- **The business literature takes this seriously and invests in interviews**

It is worth it - if it's done right!

- 89% of new hires FAILED because of skills that can be assessed in an interview
 - Poor interpersonal skills, alienate co-workers
 - Unable to accept feedback (beware those who cannot see their own weaknesses!)
 - Unable to manage emotions
 - Lack of drive

Leadership IQ Study: Why New Hires Fail, Murphy M., PR Newswire, 2005.

Goals of Interviewing in Medical Education

■ Selection

- Good “fit” with your program
- Successful completion of your program
- Be someone that you would want to hire as faculty

■ Selling

- Attracting high quality applicants on your program
- Marketing your strengths

Does the Interview Predict Resident Performance?

- 11 studies (614 participants)
 - Interview moderately predicts performance
- 17 studies (1723 participants)
 - Interview had no, weak or inverse correlation



Does Interview Predict Attrition?

- 6 studies
 - Interview did not predict attrition- 4/6 studies
 - BEI subscore did- 1 study
 - Interview and USMLE score did- 1 study



Does Interview Predict Professionalism Issues?

- 2 studies
 - Only negative comments in the Dean's Letter was associated with problem residents
 - Interview did not predict referral to an impaired physician program (35 year follow-up)



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"OK, wow me. Then impress me. Then dazzle me. Then maybe a little sadness. Then wow me again."

GROUP EXERCISE

- What questions do you ask in your interviews?
- Is it unstructured and you see where conversation leads?
- Is it structured in that you ask each applicant the same questions?

Some Interview Question Examples

- What has been your most valuable experience in medical school?
 - Applicant priorities and insight
- How would your friends describe you?
 - Self reflection and judgment
- Describe a time you had an ethical dilemma and what you did to handle it.
 - Conflict management and judgment

Potential Areas of Focus

- Motivation
- Problem solving skills
- Commitment to your field
- Leadership skills
- Professionalism
- Communication skills
- Others

Interview Types

- Unstructured
- Structured
 - Behavioral interviews
 - Multiple mini interviews
 - Competency based interviews
- Group/team interviews
- Others?



Behavioral Event Interviews

- Describe a PAST experiences to exemplify characteristics that are sought for the program.
- “Tell me about a time when”
- Take notes and record actual responses

Multiple Mini Interviews

- Series of short, structured interview stations used to assess non-cognitive qualities
 - Cultural sensitivity
 - Maturity
 - Teamwork
 - Empathy
 - Reliability
 - Communication skills
- Generally, the situational questions posed in an MMI touch on the following areas:
 - Ethical Decision Making;
 - Critical Thinking;
 - Communication Skills;
 - Current Healthcare and Societal Issues.
- MMI is not intended to test specific knowledge in the field.

Competency Based Interviews

- Each interviewer focuses his/her questions on one competency
 - Communication and Interpersonal skills
 - Professionalism
 - Systems based practice
 - Practice based learning
- Patient care- Dean's letter comments, LOR
- Medical knowledge- USMLE/Comlex, clerkship grades



"I really believe my research abilities would be an asset to whatever this company is called."

GROUP EXERCISE

- In groups, discuss your interview process.
 - How many interviews does the applicant have?
 - How long is each interview?
 - How many people are in each interview?
 - Who conducts your interviews?

How Many Interviews?

- One interview does not allow applicants to see a variety of program members
- Too many interviews is not well accepted by applicants
- Average 2-4 – reliable and valid!

Who Should Interview?

- Program Director?
 - Everyone wants to meet him/her
- Faculty
 - Might not know about some areas of the program
- Residents
 - Experience with interviewing?
- Program Coordinator
 - Not a physician

Preparing Interviewers

- Request that they take notes
- Review questions that cannot be asked
 - Family planning, gender issues
 - Disabilities – no medical questions
- Review the goals of the interview and the scoring rubric
- Give them information about the program

To See or Not To See

- Unblinded interviewers correlated their scores with the USMLE scores
- Options
 - Complete blinding
 - Partial blinding- no USMLE or grades but allow LORs and personal statements



Scoring Interview

- Use anchors
 - Choose specific characteristic or competency that you seek in your applicant
 - List behaviors/responses that would correspond with the presence or absence of that trait
 - Let's try TEAMWORK
- Use standard scoring sheet/rubric

Best Practices for Resident Interviewing

- Decide what your goals of interviewing are and craft the interview accordingly.
- Have set questions that are asked of all applicants. No unstructured interviews.
- Train interviewers in advance
 - Especially on illegal questions
- Use a scoring system with a written anchor
- Use multiple interviewers

The Future

- Video interviews
 - Web-based conference interviews
 - Regional interview fairs
 - Others?
-
- Need more evidence!
 - Studies to date have varied performance outcomes and limited power

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Questions?

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