Residency Interviewing Process

Best Practices
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Create a goal sheet that highlights the top ATTRIBUTES for the residents you seek

1. **Shaping the learning experience** -- taking an active role in their own learning and knowledge acquisition.

2. **Self-management and coping skills** -- balancing the demands of medical school with other aspects of life by prioritizing, setting limits, adapting to diverse environments, and appropriately requesting feedback and assistance from professors or other students.

3. **Fostering a team environment** -- fostering a cooperative work environment and working as a team, helping others, showing sportsmanship, and communicating with team members.
4. **Interpersonal skills and professionalism** -- interacting with colleagues, professors, residents, physicians, and other healthcare professionals in a mature, respectful, and professional manner.

5. **Interacting with patients and families** -- empathetic and communication oriented behaviors when interacting with patients and their family members.

6. **Technical knowledge and skill** - demonstrating an appropriate understanding of medical knowledge and skills.
7. **Extra effort and motivation** -- being motivated and conscientious, as well as exhibiting leadership.

8. **Ethical behavior** -- being honest, exhibiting integrity, adhering to the formal code of medical ethics, maintaining patient confidentiality, maintaining appropriate interpersonal relationships with patients, adhering to the ethical norms of the profession, reporting others’ unethical behavior, and appropriately reporting mistakes, errors, and contradictory findings.
9. Mentoring and educating students -- structuring work activities so that students can learn from their experiences, suggesting readings to help students excel, demonstrating techniques and procedures to students, being patient with and showing concern for students, responding to questions in a constructive manner, providing guidance to students regarding their educational process, and providing performance feedback to students.

10. Maintaining calm under pressure -- maintaining composure during stressful situations, especially those occurring when performing medical procedures.
Stay current on:

- What residents are told regarding preparing for interviews and evaluating opportunities.

- Check the American Medical Association website (http://www.ama-assn.org/) for current news and articles.

- A great current example is: “The Residency Interview: Making the Most of It” By Phyllis Kopriva. It can be found in the AMA website under TRANSITIONING RESIDENCY
Understand the legal obligations you have and questions you cannot ask

- Asking questions regarding race, religion, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation marital status, family planning, and nationality should never be asked. **Not because of how you will use it, but because of how it could be used.**
Become familiar with …

- Some of the biases that you may experience as you try to standardize your actions to make the process more fair.

- Unconscious biases may affect evaluations and decisions made in recruitment processes in academic medicine.
You can mitigate some of the effects of unconscious bias in evaluating job candidates. These steps may include:

1. Asking individuals to reflect on unconscious biases by taking the online version of the IAT (Implicit Association Test).

2. Creating a more objective, structured interview process by:
   A) Setting criteria or using objective measures to assess the skills needed for effective job performance.
   B) Administering training to all involved in the search and interview process on how to conduct structured interviews.
   C) Using performance, satisfaction, and turnover rates of new hires to measure the effectiveness of the interview process.
3. Be aware that recommenders of applicants may hold unconscious biases, and therefore may present skewed representations of applicants in their letters of recommendation.

4. Consider that cultural differences can affect first impressions of candidates. For instance, the standard interview in the US uses the criteria of self-confidence, goal orientation, enthusiasm, and leadership, even though these qualities may not be apparent in people of more reserved cultures.

5. Reserve ample time for the interviews and evaluations of candidates, as sex bias emerges more when evaluators are under time pressure.
Decide what questions you want to consistently ask.

- Prepare at least 3 questions and to consistently ask so that you can compare each candidate.

- Here are some standard questions that are asked by program directors and staff across the country. (Note: What an interviewer is assessing is listed in parenthesis)

  A) Why did you choose this specialty? (this question showcases decision making)

  B) Why are you interested in this program? (this question highlights the candidates interest in your particular program and what they hope to achieve as a result of being in it)
C) What are your goals? (this question looks at long term plans)

D) Tell me about yourself? (typical starting question but it should be asked with parameters to help the candidate articulate who they are professionally)

E) What did you do before medicine? (This question would assess the candidate’s passion and work ethic.)

F) Why should we pick you? (This question helps assess strengths especially when comparing other candidates).
Example:

1. Attributes that I seek in a candidate:
   a. Strong research skills (- must demonstrate ability to stay current in the field)
   b. Ability to multi-task (must be able to talk to patients, other staff, perform a procedure and monitor a given situation)
   c. Strong decision making skills (must be able to determine the level of a situation and when to get additional support and the type of support quickly)
Why Structured Interviews?

- Research by Alexander Olawaiye, John Yeh and Matthew Withiam-Leitch from the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics from the University at Buffalo School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, showed that a structured selection process of residency applicants can predict their subsequent 1st year clinical performance.

- In other words, It is, important for each program to formulate a uniform and objective selection process based on the interests and concerns of that particular program. Furthermore, an essential component of which is an interview process that may predict future performance of the residents.
Ensuring that your process stays inviting

- Other items that will make the process feel inviting are…
  - The website,
  - The invitation (letter or email)
  - The schedule or events planned around campus

- Your planned interactions and materials can make your program appear friendly and inviting…
Examples of programs

- Vanderbilt -
  https://medschool.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vumcfrr/vumcfss/housing.php

- UCSF –
  http://medicine.ucsf.edu/education/residency/application/sfliving.html
My Parting Tips

- Create a process where you can utilize your instincts and a structured portion to evaluate candidates
- Know how to ask the question and how to get an answer that will help you evaluate the candidates’ ability
- Check the references Well!
Great Websites and

- Good guiding principles for interviewing candidates (http://ucsfhr.ucsf.edu/files/new_hire_checklist/A9_Interviewing.pdf)
- Tips on writing good letters of recommendation (Harvard)
- Reference check general practices (http://jobsearch.about.com/od/referencesrecommendations/a/refercheck.htm)
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