

EMERGENCY MEDICINE

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 8 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 5 Was this number sufficient? Yes (but only because I was definitely staying in the Philadelphia area, otherwise this number would probably be too small)

Interview season (month/year): 10/2005 to 1/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Breakfast with overview presentation on the program. Individual interviews, usually 4-5 with program director, 2-3 attendings and at least one resident. Lunch, can include attending a noon conference—always involves opportunity to interact with a lot of residents. Tour of facilities. Sometimes a wrap-up session.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Type of EM you might want to practice (community, academic, etc). How to deal with the ‘fish bowl’ effect (other specialists critiquing care). Qualities you possess that you think makes EM a fit for you. What you think you will need to work on the most during internship after finishing 3rd yr.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): “If you had to remove one state from the country what would it be and why?”---yeah, left field I know.

How did you prepare for your interviews? I did very little to prepare...just read up on the programs and had a few questions ready. I don’t get stressed by interviews and don’t like to be too rehearsed in my answers. Since EM is a stressful field it’s best to prepare in whatever way that you think will make you appear perfectly calm and comfortable—interviewers will remark on this and you can talk up your ability to have “grace under pressure”.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. My “away rotation” was at an affiliate. It helped because it is good to see how different types of ED’s operate and be able to fall back on that during interviews. I’m not sure how necessary it is as far as getting an interview and your chances of matching.

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr. Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 15 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Social gathering usually the night prior to the event with residents. Program Overview. Attending Interviews. Resident Interview(s). Tour of Facility. Lunch.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why EM? Talk about Research. Difficult problem during med school.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Describe an ethical dilemma. Give a case description and how you dealt with it

How did you prepare for your interviews? Plane, hotel and car rental reservations. Printed maps of location. Called prior to interview to confirm

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Programs liked the comments and grades from programs they were familiar with.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes. Email: Kristopher.Lyon@gmail.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Multiple, including Bernie Lopez

Did you use: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 31 Was this number sufficient? Yes (too many)

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day:

- Dinner with residents evening prior
- Intro meeting
- Attend portion of didactics
- 4-5 individual interviews (between 20-30 minutes each)
- Lunch with Residents
- Tour
- Wrap Up

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- Why did you choose this specialty?; Do you foresee any problems with this specialty? What field would you choose if this specialty did not exist?
- Why did you apply to our program?; What can you bring to this program?
- What would you do in this situation (usually re: conflict resolution)?
- What questions do you have for me (sometimes this was asked as the initial question)?
- What do you do for fun; what is your life outside of medicine?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- What is your biggest concern about this program (what would you change about this program)?
- What would your friends say they don't like about you?
- Create a question for yourself, and then answer it
- Describe a type of patient that you don't like to treat
- Noting a musical interest on my resume, attending asked me to play his guitar

How did you prepare for your interviews?

- Practiced some more common questions
- Extensively read program website, and surveys (such as SAEM, EMRA)
- Ironed my suit

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes or No. Did you find this helpful as an applicant?

- Yes. I found it useful in the sense that I was able to gain experience in different practice environments, as well as to have additional chances to obtain letters of recommendation.

Additional comments/advice:

- Prior to interviewing, the process seemed intimidating, and that as an applicant I would have to "sell myself". However, after even one interview I found that the process is more about finding the best fit for both parties involved. In reality, the applicants have more sway in the match algorithm and you are really at the interview to evaluate all you can about the program and make the best decisions come rank list time. So, as corny as it sounds, be yourself and use the day for your own selection purposes.
- Everyone tries to come up with some complex way to rank programs (i.e. Excel spreadsheet with multiple categories), but most people end up ranking on gut feel (i.e. Where would I be happiest)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: Yes – jbiggg@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Bernard Lopez, MD

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 25 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 15 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 02/06

Typical structure of interview day: 1 to 2 hour program overview with Program Director, three to six interviews (typically 20 minutes each), lunch with residents, and tour of the emergency department and some of the hospital.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Tell me about yourself; tell me about this (part of CV i.e. research, extracurricular activity); strengths and weaknesses; why emergency medicine; what is the greatest problem facing the field; what are you looking for in a program; where do you see yourself in the next ten years; what do you do in your spare time; tell me about an interesting patient; do you have any questions?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No unusual tasks; tell me why we should pick you over our other applicants; what physician do you admire most and why; of the 2 programs you rotated at, which would you pick for residency and why?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I read about the program on its website, looked at the information in the SAEM residency catalog (<http://www.saem.org/rescat/contents.htm>) and the EMRA Match guide (<http://www.emramatch.org/index.asp>). You should be prepared for the common questions and also know your CV cold. Try to prepare some specific questions for the program as well as the standard opinion questions you can ask anywhere.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes

Additional comments/advice: Feel free to contact with questions.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: hshah1979@gmail.com

Specialty: EM

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one):

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 18 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/2005 to 02/2006

Typical structure of interview day: Several variations, 2 main formats are:

- 1) day starts 7-8am intro and powerpoint by program director (PD), followed by brief presentations by other faculty carrying day until noon. Then lunch w/residents and tour. Then interviews and wrap up session w/PD. Finish day around 4pm
- 2) lectures in morning (grand-rounds/morning report/etc.), then interviews, then lunch w/residents, then tour and wrap up session by program director.

Popular topics covered in the interviews:

- why the specialty?
- most difficult patient
- most interesting patient
- why this program/location?
- why are you good for EM?
- any hesitations about this program?

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

- 1) tell me about a complex scenario (not necessarily clinical) and how you thought/worked your way through it. Goal is to show me you can reason your way through a complex situation.
- 2) tell me something not on your resume
- 3) why are you going to be my chief resident?
- 4) any questions? They will ask you this, over and over and over and over and over again. Sometimes, this is the only thing they ask. Have at least a few questions burned into your memory and don't be afraid to repeat them over and over again to different interviewers.
- 5) What other programs are you looking at?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Read scutwork.com, look at program web-site, read

studentdoctor.net.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Helpful bc was my 2nd rotation in the field (EM). It helped me choose the specialty, it showed the programs I was definitely interested in EM. Also, it allowed me to get to know faculty at the away institution.

Additional comments/advice:

-Always be honest

-Remember you're marketing yourself. There will be opportunity to overtly tell the PD why you're so great (ie. Response to "why will you be my chief resident?"). But, there are also subtle effective ways to play yourself up. For example, if you speak Spanish, instead of asking if they have a large latino population you can ask "I speak Spanish and would like to make use of that during residency...does your program have a substantial latino population?"...just make sure you think ahead of time (ie. If you know the program has zero latino patients, it may make you look uninterested.)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Of course.

Email: jif001@jefferson.edu, jifischer@hotmail.com, jonisafis@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Drs. Lopez, Kolecki, and Griswold

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 16 Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: Morning presentation about program, then alternating interviews & tour for rest of day with lunch with residents some time in between

Popular topics covered in the interviews: why EM? tell me about your EM rotations & what you thought of the different places? Where else are you interviewing? What do you see in the future for your career? Tell me about your hobbies outside of medicine.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): No tasks or pimping. Occasional annoying questions like Tell me an ethical dilemma you encountered in medical school. What is the most creative thing you've ever done?

How did you prepare for your interviews? Mostly just thought about my responses to the obvious questions - why EM, etc. I don't think a lot of preparation is necessary. You definitely get better as the season progresses, so I do recommend scheduling some early ones that you are less interested in if possible. Not absolutely necessary though. I also looked over some of the questions in Iseron, but it was worthless and often wrong. Terrible book.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes. Did you find this helpful as an applicant? Yes, very helpful. I did two away rotations and the required one because I was very interested in being in NYC. It was very useful for getting a sense about programs in new york. Also, I was frequently asked about my experiences at the different places and how they compared. Additionally, it seemed helpful to have letters of recommendation from attendings that they knew (worked in same city).

Additional comments/advice:

Do not listen to Iseron. A skirt suit is definitely not necessary for women and neither is black. I wore a brown wool pants suit and got many compliments. Overall, EM interviews are very laid black. Just be yourself! I know everyone says that, but seriously, it is the best advice. They already know everything they need to; they just want to make sure you are someone they could enjoy working with.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Yes. Email: lkwillis44@yahoo.com

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Drs. Kolecki, Bernard Lopez.

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 30

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 10/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: 8 am: sit down and eat something while they give you their spiel on why their program rocks. Interview with 3-6 people from the program for about 20mins each. Eat lunch at noon. Get a tour of the hospital in the afternoon.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Why do you like this program? Why should we pick you? They looked at my CV and tried to ask questions based upon that.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): I think the hardest ones are, "so, tell me about you." How are you a leader? It is new year's eve and you are the attending. Your resident asks to go home early. What do you say?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I accepted an interview early on that was a "practice interview."

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes I did and it was very helpful.

Additional comments/advice: If you are really interested in a program...go there. You may be surprised at what you find. I got burned out interviewing and you should only really go to interviews that you are serious about.

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Advisor for Specialty (if you had one): Dr Bernard Lopez

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 20

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 10

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 12/05 to 1/06

Typical structure of interview day: The day usually began with an introduction to the program and a pretty detailed explanation of what sets that program apart. There was usually a presentation by the program director and the chair of the dept. This usually lasted for a total of an hour and a half or so. Then the interviews began. I had usually between 3 and 6 interviews. Then there was a tour, followed by lunch with the residents (or vice versa). The days usually ended around 1-2pm.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Just about every interview I went to asked why EM, why are you applying to this program, and what I thought I would be doing in 10 years. Other common questions were – tell me about an interesting pt that you saw, tell me what you think are essential qualities of a good EP, what is your biggest weakness, tell me about a medical error you made, what is your biggest disappointment...

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.): Not many, mostly very straightforward and conversational. One person asked me if I was a car what would I be and why?

How did you prepare for your interviews? I would look at the program website to learn about it and see if there were any concerns that I had or things that I should address. Other than that I did not prepare.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? I did one away rotation and I think it was helpful, but not essential. I think that I would have a similar likelihood of matching where I want to without it.

Additional comments/advice: Enjoy the process. It is fun to get to travel around the country and interview with some of the brightest, most ambitious people in your future career.

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? Email: james.little@jefferson.edu

Specialty: Emergency Medicine

Did you use ERAS or SFMatch or Other: ERAS

Number of programs applied to: 27

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Number of interviews attended for specialty: 12

Was this number sufficient? Yes

Interview season (month/year): 11/05 to 01/06

Typical structure of interview day: Meet and greet in the morning, powerpoint presentation of program highlights, interviews with faculty/resident, lunch with residents, tour of facility.

Popular topics covered in the interviews: Research (if applicable), outside interests, why that specific program, etc. As a general rule, and with only one exception in my experience, EM interviews are VERY laid back, the faculty is trying to get to know who you are as a person more than trying to challenge you with tough questions. Also, for the most part, the student is in the driver seat so programs are trying to sell their program's strengths to you.

Some difficult questions/unusual tasks (tying knots, etc.):

The first question out of a program director's mouth was "Give me examples of how you showed leadership in several different situations."

"If you had to get rid of one state in the US which one would it be and why?"

How did you prepare for your interviews?

Read the program's website thoroughly, then the night before, usually in the hotel, I would read over the website again. I also used www.saem.org for general program information.

Did you do an away rotation in your specialty field? Yes, I did an away rotation in California. I was

hoping to go back out west (because I am from there) and it is very important to make it known to west coast programs that you are serious about their program and geography. I think it was very helpful to do the away rotation because I got a letter of recommendation from that rotation and I know that it helped me get more interviews on the west coast. I don't think it looks as serious if you apply to west coast programs but don't spend any time there doing rotations.

Additional comments/advice: Do away rotations where you think you might want to go!!! I can't stress

this enough. There is nothing like spending a month somewhere to let you know whether that place is for you or not. You get great look at the residents in action, the faculty teaching, the relationships with ancillary staff, etc. Also you have the opportunity to get to know the program director and many other key faculty a lot better than you would in a 30 minute interview.

I think it is better to schedule programs that you think you will like later in the season because you are a fresher face when they create their rank list. This is also a good idea for programs you where you do an away rotation (if they also require an interview) so they don't forget your face and you can say 'hey remember me'.

Write your program directors at the end of your interview season and tell them that you are very interested in their program (obviously only do this if you really are interested!). It is important to stay in contact with the programs you want to be at; it will only help you when it comes to their rank list.

Apply to more programs than you think you will need. It is a lot easier to decline an interview than it is to apply to programs late because you didn't get enough interviews initially. I wasn't sure how strong my application was so I applied to 27 programs and I got 21 interviews so it was great because I got to pick and choose where I wanted to spend my time, money, energy, etc.

Join frequent flyer programs before you apply and try to stick to one or two airlines so you can rack up some miles. The same goes for rental car companies, hotel chains, etc. Southwest (I think) is the best airline for interviewers because they are the cheapest, but they also give you a refund/credit if you need to cancel a ticket and don't charge for changing a ticket. Other airlines charge \$100 to cancel/change a ticket. I did a lot of flight juggling so this was a handy feature of southwest (let it be known that I am not a paid endorser, nor do I own any stock in southwest ☺)

May future applicants in your specialty contact you for advice? YES, anytime

Email: joshua.sheridan@jefferson.edu or josh.sheridan@gmail.com
