

medical residency interview preparation

Medical Residency Interview Preparation: How to Ace Your Residency Interview with Confidence

medical residency interview preparation is a crucial step in the journey of any aspiring physician. After the intense years of medical school and clinical rotations, the residency interview stands as a pivotal moment that can determine the trajectory of your medical career. It's not just about showcasing your academic achievements or clinical skills; it's about demonstrating your personality, professionalism, and fit within a program. Preparing effectively for your residency interviews can help you stand out in a competitive field and secure a position that aligns with your career goals.

Understanding the Residency Interview Process

Before diving into specific strategies for medical residency interview preparation, it's important to understand what residency programs are looking for. Interviews are designed to assess not only your medical knowledge but also your communication skills, ethical judgment, teamwork, and ability to handle stress.

Types of Residency Interviews

Residency interviews can vary in format, and knowing what to expect can help you tailor your preparation:

- **Traditional One-on-One Interviews:** The most common format where you meet individually with faculty members or program directors.
- **Panel Interviews:** A group of interviewers asks questions, allowing them to evaluate you from multiple perspectives.
- **Multiple Mini Interviews (MMIs):** A series of short, structured stations focusing on different scenarios or questions to assess various competencies.
- **Virtual Interviews:** Especially common in recent years, requiring you to be comfortable with video conferencing platforms.

Knowing the format ahead of time is part of smart medical residency interview preparation and helps reduce surprises on the interview day.

Key Strategies for Effective Medical Residency Interview Preparation

Research the Residency Programs Thoroughly

One of the cornerstones of successful interview preparation is in-depth research. Each residency program has its own culture, strengths, and expectations. Familiarize yourself with the program's mission, faculty interests, recent achievements, and the types of patients they serve. This knowledge allows you to tailor your responses to show how you align with their values and how you can contribute to their team.

Practice Common Interview Questions

Certain questions are staples in residency interviews. Preparing thoughtful, honest answers to these can boost your confidence:

- *Why did you choose this specialty?*
- *Tell me about a challenging clinical situation and how you handled it.*
- *How do you handle stress and maintain work-life balance?*
- *Describe a time you worked as part of a team.*
- *What are your strengths and weaknesses?*

Incorporate specific examples from your clinical experiences to make your answers vivid and memorable. Practicing with peers, mentors, or through mock interviews can also help refine your delivery and body language.

Highlight Your Unique Qualities and Experiences

Residency programs are looking for candidates who bring something special to their cohort. Reflect on your unique experiences such as research projects, volunteer work, leadership roles, or personal challenges you've overcome. These details help interviewers see you as a well-rounded individual and not just a list of grades and test scores.

Prepare Questions to Ask Interviewers

Asking insightful questions shows genuine interest and engagement. Prepare questions about the program's culture, educational philosophy, mentorship opportunities, and resident support systems. Avoid questions that can be easily answered by the program's website; instead, focus on aspects that demonstrate your forward-thinking approach to your training and career.

Mastering the Day of the Interview

Dress Professionally and Arrive Early

First impressions matter. Dressing professionally in business attire signals respect and seriousness. Arriving early (or logging in ahead of time for virtual interviews) allows you to acclimate to the environment and gather your thoughts.

Manage Stress and Stay Positive

Interviews can be nerve-wracking, but managing anxiety is part of successful medical residency interview preparation. Techniques such as deep breathing, visualization, or positive affirmations can calm nerves. Remember that interviewers understand the pressure applicants face and often look for resilience and composure as much as for clinical acumen.

Communicate Clearly and Listen Actively

During the interview, speak clearly and confidently, but also be an active listener. This means paying close attention to questions, asking for clarification if needed, and responding thoughtfully. Engaging in a two-way conversation rather than a one-sided Q&A can leave a lasting positive impression.

Leveraging Mock Interviews and Feedback

One of the most effective tools in medical residency interview preparation is the mock interview. Simulating the interview environment with faculty members, mentors, or peers can expose areas where you excel and highlight aspects needing improvement.

Benefits of Mock Interviews

- Familiarizes you with common questions and interview dynamics.

- Improves your ability to articulate thoughts under pressure.
- Allows you to receive constructive criticism on your verbal and non-verbal communication.
- Boosts confidence by reducing uncertainty.

Recording your mock interviews and reviewing them can also help identify nervous habits or unclear responses you might not notice in the moment.

Additional Tips for a Successful Interview Experience

Be Honest and Authentic

Interviewers value authenticity. Instead of trying to provide what you think they want to hear, focus on being genuine. If you don't know an answer, it's better to acknowledge it honestly and discuss how you would find a solution rather than bluffing.

Maintain Professionalism Beyond the Interview

Remember that interactions with everyone you meet during the interview day—from administrative staff to current residents—contribute to the impression you leave. Politeness, gratitude, and professionalism should extend to all encounters.

Follow Up with a Thank-You Note

Sending a personalized thank-you email expressing appreciation for the opportunity to interview can reinforce your interest and professionalism. It's a simple gesture that can keep you top of mind as programs make their final decisions.

Medical residency interview preparation is more than just rehearsing answers; it's about presenting your best self in a way that aligns with the values and needs of the program. By investing time in research, practicing communication, and managing your mindset, you set the stage for a memorable and successful interview experience. With each step, you move closer to joining a residency program where you can thrive and grow into the physician you aspire to be.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the most common questions asked during a medical residency interview?

Common questions include: 'Tell me about yourself,' 'Why did you choose this specialty?', 'Describe a challenging clinical experience,' 'How do you handle stress?', and 'What are your career goals?' Preparing thoughtful and authentic answers to these can help you stand out.

How can I effectively prepare for behavioral questions in a residency interview?

Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your responses. Practice recalling specific examples from your clinical experiences that highlight your skills, teamwork, problem-solving, and professionalism.

What are some tips to make a good impression during a virtual medical residency interview?

Ensure a quiet, well-lit environment with a neutral background. Test your technology beforehand, dress professionally, maintain eye contact by looking at the camera, and prepare to engage actively despite the virtual format.

How important is it to research the residency program before the interview?

Researching the program is crucial. Understanding the program's strengths, values, faculty interests, and recent achievements allows you to tailor your answers, ask insightful questions, and demonstrate genuine interest.

What strategies can help manage interview anxiety for medical residency applicants?

Practice mock interviews, engage in relaxation techniques like deep breathing or meditation, get adequate rest before the interview, and remind yourself that it's a two-way conversation aimed at finding the best fit for both parties.

Additional Resources

Medical Residency Interview Preparation: Strategies for Success in a Competitive Landscape

medical residency interview preparation represents a critical phase in the journey of aspiring physicians. As the gateway to securing a coveted position in residency programs,

this stage demands thorough readiness that extends beyond mere clinical knowledge. Given the competitive nature of medical residency applications, candidates must approach interview preparation with a strategic mindset, blending self-awareness, communication skills, and an understanding of program-specific expectations.

Understanding the Stakes of Medical Residency Interviews

The medical residency interview is not just a formality but a decisive factor that residency program directors consider when selecting candidates. According to the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) data, applicants who perform well in interviews often have a significant edge in matching successfully. Interviews provide programs with insights into an applicant's interpersonal skills, professionalism, and fit within the team culture—qualities that academic records and test scores alone cannot fully capture.

Moreover, medical residency interview preparation involves adapting to various interview formats. Traditional one-on-one interviews are now often supplemented or replaced by panel interviews, Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI), and virtual interviews, especially in recent years due to the pandemic. Each format evaluates different competencies, requiring candidates to tailor their preparation accordingly.

Key Components of Effective Interview Preparation

To excel during medical residency interviews, candidates should focus on several core areas:

- **Self-Reflection and Personal Narrative:** Understanding and articulating one's motivations for choosing a specialty is paramount. Candidates should prepare to discuss their journey, challenges overcome, and future aspirations with clarity and sincerity.
- **Program Research:** Familiarity with the residency program's values, curriculum, faculty interests, and recent achievements allows candidates to demonstrate genuine interest and tailor their responses effectively.
- **Practice and Mock Interviews:** Engaging in simulated interviews provides opportunities to refine communication skills, receive feedback, and reduce anxiety. Incorporating behavioral and situational questions in practice sessions can enhance readiness.
- **Mastering Common and Specialty-Specific Questions:** While typical questions such as "Why this specialty?" or "Tell me about a time you faced a difficult situation" recur, some programs emphasize clinical reasoning or ethical dilemmas relevant to their specialty.

- **Professionalism and Presentation:** Beyond verbal responses, first impressions through attire, punctuality, and demeanor contribute significantly to the overall evaluation.

Adapting to Virtual and In-Person Interview Environments

The shift toward virtual interviews has introduced new dynamics in medical residency interview preparation. While virtual formats offer convenience, they also require candidates to manage technological aspects and create a professional ambiance remotely.

Challenges of Virtual Interviews

Technical glitches, limited non-verbal communication cues, and distractions in the home environment can impact performance. Candidates must test their equipment, optimize lighting and background settings, and minimize interruptions to maintain professionalism.

Strategies for Virtual Success

- Conduct trial runs with mentors or peers to simulate the interview experience.
- Use neutral, uncluttered backgrounds to avoid distractions.
- Maintain eye contact by looking into the camera rather than the screen.
- Prepare contingency plans, such as having a backup device or internet source.

Conversely, in-person interviews allow for richer interpersonal interactions but may increase stress due to travel logistics and time constraints. Preparation for in-person formats should include planning for arrival times, understanding the interview location, and dressing appropriately to convey professionalism.

Leveraging Behavioral Interview Techniques

Residency programs increasingly utilize behavioral interview questions to assess candidates' past experiences as predictors of future performance. This approach often involves the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to provide structured and compelling responses.

Applying the STAR Method

Candidates benefit from preparing specific examples that highlight teamwork, leadership, conflict resolution, and ethical decision-making. For instance, describing a time when they had to advocate for a patient under challenging circumstances can demonstrate critical thinking and empathy.

Balancing Authenticity and Professionalism

While rehearsed answers can aid fluency, authenticity remains vital. Interviewers can often discern when responses are overly scripted. Candidates should strive to convey genuine reflections while maintaining professionalism.

Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them

Several recurring issues can undermine even the most qualified applicants during medical residency interviews:

- **Lack of Preparation:** Insufficient knowledge about the program or inability to articulate personal motivations may signal disinterest.
- **Overemphasis on Academic Achievements:** While important, focusing exclusively on grades and test scores neglects interpersonal and communication skills.
- **Poor Time Management:** Rambling answers or failure to address questions directly can frustrate interviewers and diminish impact.
- **Negative Attitudes:** Speaking ill of previous institutions, mentors, or colleagues reflects poorly on professionalism.

Addressing these pitfalls requires deliberate preparation, self-awareness, and practice.

Integrating Feedback and Continuous Improvement

The iterative process of medical residency interview preparation benefits greatly from feedback. Candidates should seek evaluations from trusted mentors, peers, and career advisors to identify strengths and areas for growth.

Recording mock interviews can also provide valuable insights into body language, tone,

and pacing. Adjustments based on constructive criticism enable candidates to refine their performance and build confidence.

Role of Residency Advisors and Coaching Services

Many medical schools and external organizations offer specialized coaching to support candidates in navigating the interview process. These services can provide tailored strategies, mock interviews with experienced faculty, and resources for stress management.

While such coaching may represent an additional investment, studies suggest that well-prepared candidates demonstrate improved interview performance and higher match rates, underscoring the value of professional guidance.

Conclusion: Navigating the Complex Landscape of Residency Interviews

Medical residency interview preparation encompasses a multifaceted approach that integrates self-reflection, program knowledge, communication skills, and adaptability. In an increasingly competitive and evolving environment, candidates who proactively engage in comprehensive preparation position themselves advantageously.

Understanding the nuances of interview formats, mastering behavioral techniques, and leveraging feedback contribute to a balanced and confident presentation. Ultimately, the interview serves as a pivotal opportunity for candidates to transcend their academic credentials and convey the qualities that define them as future physicians.

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Bemo Academic Consulting Inc, 2020-06-25 BeMo's Ultimate Guide to Residency Interview is the most comprehensive resource to use when preparing for your residency interviews. Written by former admissions committee members, interview evaluators, Medical Doctors, and award-winning scientists, this guide is a must-read for all applicants with an upcoming residency interview. The guide includes proven strategies, sample interview questions and answers, and 80 practice interview questions, along with access to a sample residency interview. Here is what is included in this book: BeMo's proven formula for acing any residency interview question, Top 2 myths about residency

interview preparation, 5 Common errors made in residency interviews, How to manage stress and demonstrate confidence, 18 proven strategies to prepare for and ace any residency interview, Proven Strategies to approach and ace 6 common types of residency interview questions, Common points of debate in medicine and advanced preparation tactics, 20 Sample residency interview questions with expert analysis and answers, 80 practice residency interview questions, The #1 tip after your interview that is usually missed by most applicants, Free sample residency interview by InterviewProf: BeMo's revolutionary online mock interview platform, Bonus resources, Over 200 pages of tips, strategies and advice from admission experts including former admissions committee members, interview evaluators, Medical Doctors and award-winning scientists BeMo Academic Consulting Inc. (BeMo(R)) is a global leader in residency interview preparation with the only scientifically proven preparation programs designed to increase applicants' practice scores by up to 28%. BeMo's expertise in residency interview prep are sought after by media and official university career centers. BeMo's core value is to help reduce the social gap at professional schools by teaching students the essential qualities required by such programs. BeMo's team members believe everyone deserves access to higher education and they want to make sure every student gets a fair chance at admissions to these very competitive programs regardless of his or her socioeconomic, racial or cultural background. BeMo(R), BeMo Academic(TM), BeMo Consulting(TM), BeMo Academic Consulting (TM), MMI SIM(TM), InterviewProf(TM), Get In Or Your Money Back(R) are trademarks of BeMo Academic Consulting Inc.

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medical residency interview preparation: The Aspiring Doctor: A Guide to Achieving Your Medical School Dreams Pasquale De Marco, Are you dreaming of a career in medicine? Do you want to make a real difference in the lives of others? If so, then medical school is the next step on your journey. This comprehensive guide will provide you with all the information you need to know about the medical school application process, from choosing the right school to writing a powerful personal statement. You will also learn how to prepare for the MCATs and other standardized tests, as well as how to navigate the financial aid process. In addition to the practical advice, this book will also provide you with the inspiration and motivation you need to succeed in medical school. You will hear from current and former medical students about their experiences, and you will learn about the many opportunities that await you as a physician. With its expert advice and inspiring stories, this book is the perfect resource for anyone who is considering a career in medicine. It will help you every step of the way as you pursue your dream of becoming a doctor. Medical school is a challenging journey, but it is also an incredibly rewarding one. As a physician, you will have the opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of your patients. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that you are using your knowledge and skills to help others. If you are ready to embark on this exciting journey, then this book is for you. It will provide you with the tools and guidance you need to achieve your medical school dreams. If you like this book, write a review!

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situations such as the virtual environment for residency applications, the spotlight on residency wellness, and incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion in our personal and institutional missions.

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medical residency interview preparation: International Medical Graduates in the United States Hassaan Tohid, Howard Maibach, 2021-01-04 Thousands of international medical graduates come to the United States to start their career as physicians. Many of them, however, are not aware of the challenges and problems that they may encounter along the way. These difficulties can range from the language and cultural barriers to a lack of confidence and self-esteem. Many students are also unaware of the other career options besides getting into a clinical residency program. As a result of these issues, a great number of foreign medical students remain unmatched into the National Resident Matching Program. Not matching can be devastating for these graduates, both financially and medically. Students often suffer from psychological effects like major depression and generalized anxiety disorder. This book outlines the potential problems faced by these graduates and their possible solutions. Each chapter collects research evidence, interviews and surveys to gather information to work on each possible problem one by one and describes a solution in great detail. Comprised of thirty chapters, each chapter is broken down into smaller sub-sections to investigate the main theme in depth. Issues addressed include the different types of international medical graduates and their lives in the United States, differences in the education system and healthcare system, the triangle of residency, language and cultural barriers, lack of professional contacts, confidence, self-image and self-esteem issues, and restriction to specific fields and career paths. Written by experts in the field, International Medical Graduates in the United States is a first of its kind text that addresses the biggest issues faced by foreign medical graduates in today's world.

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designers, school administrators, researchers, academicians, and medical students seeking coverage on major and high-profile issues in medical education.

medical residency interview preparation: Staying Human during Residency Training

Allan D. Peterkin, 2016-01-01 The ultimate survival guide for medical students, interns, residents, and fellows, *Staying Human during Residency Training* provides time-tested advice and the latest information on every aspect of a resident's life - from choosing a residency program, to coping with stress, enhancing self-care, and protecting personal and professional relationships. Allan D. Peterkin, MD, provides hundreds of tips on how to cope with sleep deprivation, time pressures, and ethical and legal issues. This sixth edition is not only updated to reflect the latest research and resources, but also features new material on the latest issues in residency training, including social media use, patient-centred care, the medical humanities, and the hidden curriculum of residency. Presenting practical antidotes to cynicism, careerism, and burnout, Peterkin also offers guidance on fostering more empathic connection with patients and deepening relationships with colleagues, friends, and family. Acknowledged by thousands of doctors across North America as an invaluable resource, *Staying Human during Residency Training* has helped to shape notions of trainee well-being for medical educators worldwide. Offering wise, compassionate, and professional counsel, this new edition again shows why it is required reading for medical students and new physicians pursuing postgraduate training.

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Englesbe, Michael O. Meyers, 2016-11-17 This book will be a 'how to' guide for medical students interested in pursuing a career in academic surgery. It will discuss personal traits and rationale for going into academic surgery. It will review accomplishments as a medical student that are key components of beginning an academic career and highlight what makes a student competitive for a surgical program. Sections will be devoted to mentorship, research experience and personal experiences that lead to success. The editors will also focus on gender and work-life balance issues

that often are perceived as barriers to a career in academic surgery. It will also provide key dates and sample application information for students to use as templates.

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seventh edition provides new emphasis on virtual practice, gender, diversity, and accountability in the context of medical education.. It offers practical strategies learned from new technologies and new insight on the COVID-19 pandemic regarding public health, virtual appointment protocols, and AI developments. Presenting practical antidotes regarding cynicism, careerism, and burnout, the book also offers guidance on fostering more empathic connections with patients and deepening relationships with colleagues, friends, and family. Acknowledged by thousands of doctors across North America as an invaluable resource, *Staying Human during Residency Training* has helped to shape notions of trainee well-being for medical educators worldwide. Offering wise, compassionate, and professional counsel, this new edition again shows why it is required reading for medical students and new physicians pursuing postgraduate training.

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Wischnitzer, Edith Wischnitzer, 2006-06-26 Residency is a defining period in a physician's life because it is the decisive stage for personal growth, intellectual challenge and emotional stress. It is a major transitional period transforming a medical student into a practice-ready physician. This role-change for the physician-in-training usually takes place in a new setting and necessitates coping with conflicting demands, heavy responsibility and long work hours. Adding to the residents' burden is the ongoing need to manage their financial, social and work demands. This manual was designed to help medical students on this final critical segment of their journey to become practicing physicians. It will enhance the students' awareness of the potential obstacles along the way and provide them with guidance on how to avoid them. The book includes: selecting an appropriate specialty, maximizing the chances of being selected, surviving residency and beginning practice.

medical residency interview preparation: *International Medical Graduate and the United States Medical Residency Application* Raghav Govindarajan, Sachin M. Bhagavan, Swathi

Beladakere Ramaswamy, 2020-02-04 This unique, socially conscience reference provides valuable guidance to international medical graduates (IMG's) looking to complete a residency in the United States. The medical residency application process in the United States is competitive and complex. Additionally, many IMG's go through training programs that sharply differ from the medical school training and the sociocultural elements of United States medicine and residency are unlike any other country. Organized into three parts, this book meets the need for a pragmatic, evidence based guide that answers important questions, and imparts indispensable advice to IMGs. Part I directly tackles the concerns IMG's have regarding specific elements of residency applications, including the importance of a master's degree and how to get a strong letter of recommendation. Part II then addresses how to prepare for interviews, preliminary programs and travel. Finally, the book answers the common "what ifs" and "what's next" questions many IMG's ponder. *International Medical Graduate and the United States Medical Residency Application: A Guide to Achieving Success* is a first-of-its-kind resource that presents a holistic view of residency application peppered with real life examples, easy to grasp tables and flow charts and key do's and don'ts to drive home the complex process involved in residency application.

medical residency interview preparation: *Practical Teaching in Emergency Medicine* Robert

L. Rogers, Amal Mattu, Michael E. Winters, Joseph P. Martinez, Terrence Mulligan, 2012-12-03 Emergency medicine attendings who wish to hone their teaching skills can find a number of books on educational strategies written by physicians from other disciplines. However, until the publication of the first edition of this book, they did not have access to a text written by emergency medicine physicians on methods of teaching that are directly applicable to teaching EM. This book was compiled to meet that need. Following the introductory section, which provides important background information, the book's contents are organized into 4 sections that correspond to the core needs and interests of EM educators: Section 2 focuses on practical and ethical considerations of teaching in the ED; Section 3 provides strategies for teaching specific groups of learners; Section 4 looks at the skills that are characteristic of the best EM educators; and Section 5 looks indepthly at specific teaching techniques and strategies. Now more than ever this book addresses the needs of physician educators from all over the world. New chapters discuss lecturing to an international

audience; using simulation as a teaching tool; how to make journal club work for you, and other topics that are of broad interest to medical educators in this field. In general, each chapter has been updated and reviewed to make sure the content was something that emergency physician educators could use in any country. The chapter contributors are widely regarded as leaders in the field of emergency medicine education and faculty development. Authors were given free rein to develop their chapters and write in their own style. They were asked to present their personal views on how to successfully teach the art of emergency medicine, rather than review evidence-based guidelines regarding medical education. As a result, most of the chapters have few references. This first-person approach to a multi-authored textbook yields a compilation that varies in style from chapter to chapter and exposes the reader to a variety of communication techniques.

medical residency interview preparation: Internal Medicine Training Notes and Survival Guide Kehua Zhou, 2024-11-01 The purpose of this unique title is to provide internal medicine residents and physicians, as well as other professionals engaged in internal medicine practice, with a single resource of comprehensive, abundantly helpful, time-saving training and practice notes. Developed by a now highly experienced hospitalist physician during his three years' residency training in internal medicine, as well as during his current role as a practicing hospitalist, these notes provide a broad framework and tool not only for the learning and practicing of internal medicine after graduation from professional schools and during training, but after residency training as well. The majority of the notes were presented as one to a few sentences, rendering the information succinct and easy to digest. The notes also provide simple, key information in patient care including, but not limited to, the workup and management of a wide range of clinical scenarios. The book was divided into three general areas -- 1) daily notes taken during the author's residency training (in the format of a diary with the original dates but updated knowledge and information), 2) notes for outpatient medicine and clinical subspecialties, and 3) notes as a hospitalist. The daily notes were based on knowledge and experiences the author learned from actual clinical cases (workup, medication regimen, patient education, and sometimes patient and family interactions). The notes for outpatient medicine and clinical subspecialties were based on specific topics/subspecialties and were heavily clinically oriented with a focus on patient care. The addition of notes as a hospitalist was based on the author's duties as a hospitalist, which requires knowledge and understanding of acute neurological and neurosurgical issues, various types of cancers, and some common yet complicated or uncommon clinical scenarios of infectious diseases. A major contribution to the internal medicine education literature, *Internal Medicine Training Notes and Survival Guide: An Insider's Roadmap for the Journey from Resident to Attending Physician* will appeal to a wide readership, including resident physicians, practicing physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners in internal medicine.

medical residency interview preparation: *Resident & Staff Physician* , 1987

medical residency interview preparation: *The International Medical Graduate's Guide to US Medicine & Residency Training* Patrick Craig Alguire, 2009 Written in cooperation with the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates, this is the one-source reference tool IMGs need to succeed in U.S. medicine and residency training.

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