

Interview Skills Packet for Residency Candidates

Commonly Asked Questions of Interviewees

Introductory Questions

- Tell me about yourself
 - *Prepare a ~2 minute long summary*
- What is your biggest strength? What is your greatest weakness?
 - Prepare at least 3 of each
 - Be able to give examples of times you displayed these strengths
 - Be able to elaborate on these answers:
 - *How your strengths will help you in the residency*
 - *How you can work to improve your weaknesses during residency*
- How do you handle your time-management during a hectic time?
 - Give specific examples from school/rotations/extracurricular
- If you had not chosen the pharmacy profession, what career would you choose? Why?
- Have you done anything to improve yourself this past year? What?
- Have you read something that's changed your life?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- What else do you think that I should know about you?
- Why do you think that you deserve the position?
- Describe what you do to "keep up with the literature" and tell me a me about a recent paper you've read or a presentation you have attended
- What would your coworkers say about you?
- Who among all your teachers and mentors has had the most influence on you and why?
- I see from your CV you have done a presentation about _____, what can you tell me about _____?
- Tell me why I should choose you over your peers for this residency.

Residency Specific Questions

- What made you interested in this program?
- Why have you selected this institution? And, what do you think you will bring to our program?
- What made you want to do a residency
- What drove you to the profession of pharmacy
- How will this program prepare you for your career goals?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years?
- You are required to take specific rotations. How will these help you in your pharmacy career?
- What qualities would your ideal preceptor have?

Education/Rotation Questions

- Tell me about the hardest job you have had to perform
- Tell me about a time you did work you didn't find valuable and how you dealt with this
- What was your least favorite rotation? What was your favorite rotation? Why?
- How has your education prepared you for your career?
 - Give specific examples from your work/rotation/education/extracurricular/leadership

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- What is your least favorite aspect of where you work now? Why?
- Describe a time when you felt overwhelmed and explain how you handled the experience.

Questions Involving Experiential Reflection

Clinical Experiences

- Tell me about a time you impacted a patient's healthcare.
- What was your most rewarding moment during your job/experience/rotation/etc?
- Tell me about a patient that had the greatest impact on you and your perception of pharmacy practice.
- Tell me about a difficult patient and how you were able to make an impact on their health.
- Tell me about your most memorable patient.
- Tell me about a recommendation that was accepted by your team.

Interprofessionalism

- How do you work with members of other healthcare professions?
- Describe an instance where you had to collaborate with other healthcare professionals to accomplish a goal.
- Do you prefer to work as an individual or as a team? Why?

Leadership

- Give me an example of a leadership project or position you have been in?
- Give me an example of a team situation you have worked in, what was your role within the team, and did you experience any conflicts?
- Describe your leadership style.
- As a leader in the pharmacy profession, describe a situation where you had to motivate others to accomplish a goal.

Problem Solving

- Tell me about a time when your carefully laid plans were fouled up. How did you react? What happened?
- We all have to bend the rules at one time or another. Give me an example of when you had to bend the rules and how you handled the situation.

Conflict Resolution and Ethical Dilemmas

- Tell me about a time your wish you had handled differently? How do you wish you had handled the situation? What did you learn from your mistake?
- Give me an example of a conflict you have encountered on your rotations and what you did to resolve that conflict?
- Give me an example of an instance where you disagreed with how the team handled a specific problem and how you handled the situation
- Tell me about a time when two people disagreed. How did you arrive at a compromise for the task to be successful/unsuccessful?

Just for Fun Questions

- If you were stranded on a deserted island, what two drugs would you take with you?
- If you were a drug/dosage form, what would you be?

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Questions to Ask Interviewers

Always make sure you thoroughly review the website before asking any questions to ensure that the answers are not already there!

- What are some of your former residents doing now?
- Are there any teaching/precepting opportunities?
 - If a teaching certificate is available: What are the requirements to obtain the teaching certificate?
- Tell me a project a current resident is working on.
- What do you believe makes your program so successful?
- What part of the program are you most passionate/excited about?
- What is a typical day for you? (if speaking to a resident or preceptor)
- What organizations can the residents become involved in during the program?
- How flexible are rotation schedules? Do you tailor the rotations/residency to the residents' interests? Can I change rotations that have been scheduled in the spring?
- How easy is it to get a desired elective rotation?
- Are there any opportunities to publish? How about outside of my research project?
- How are residents evaluated during the program?
- Has the pharmacy and residents ever worked with the medical department on research projects?
- What is the current pharmacy model? Are there any changes for the future?
- What clinics are available during the ambulatory care rotation?
- Are there opportunities for leadership development?
- Have there been any significant changes in the residency program this year? Are there any changes planned for next year?
- What is the vision for the pharmacy department?
- Is autonomy encouraged after the resident is oriented to the new rotation?
- What type of computer system does the hospital use?
- What was your favorite rotation? Was it the content of the rotation or the preceptors that you liked? (if speaking to a resident)
- What is the relationship between pharmacists and other healthcare providers at the hospital? Are pharmacists' recommendations and opinions valued?
- How often is there an opportunity to round in an interdisciplinary team approach?
- What changes are being made to the residency program based on prior resident feedback?

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Reflection Log

The STAR method is an interviewing strategy used to deliver all desired information in a story format when asked a behavioral interview question. You can use the following structure to reflect on some experience that will help you answer the “Questions Involving Experiential Reflection.” An example is provided below.

<p>Question. Listen carefully, understand the question, and organize your thoughts.</p> <p><i>Ex. Tell me about a time you impacted a patient’s healthcare.</i></p>	
<p>S - Situation (Give background, provide context)</p> <p><i>This past year, I was on my 6-week Internal Medicine rotation at Super-duper Hospital. My team often took care of patients with heart failure, and readmission to the hospital due to non-adherence is a common problem.</i></p>	<p>T - Task (Describe the challenge and expectations)</p> <p><i>We were taking care of one memorable patient who struggled to take his heart failure therapy regimen consistently. During my relatively short rotation, he had been admitted twice. My interprofessional team looked to pharmacy to help improve this patient’s adherence and help keep him out of the hospital. As the student pharmacist on rotation I was up to the challenge.</i></p>
<p>A - Action (Elaborate on the action you took)</p> <p><i>The first step that I took was to communicate with the patient without judgement. I asked him about his medication one-by-one, then asked how he organizes his medications. He expressed frustration that he had “too many bottles, with too many confusing names on them” and that often times he “gets frustrated and takes them all at once, or just doesn’t bother with them.” I communicated options for easing medication use, and the patient liked the idea of filling a weekly pill box. I was able to obtain a 7 day pill box, and the patient and I filled it together before he was discharged. I followed up with him a week later and he was still effectively using the pill box.</i></p>	<p>R - Results (Explain the results)</p> <p><i>From this experience, I feel that I helped this patient make the best use of important medications that can improve his life. It impacted the way I view communicating with patients, such that simple communication and identifying patient specific problems can make a big difference. I will always value patient’s unique situations as a pharmacist.</i></p>

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<p>A - Action (Elaborate on the action you took)</p>	<p>R - Results (Explain the results)</p>

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Notes
