

Potential Residency Interview Questions
[Provided by Drake student Jennifer Barker]

Note: I would equate a portion of the residency interviews to “speed dating.” About every 30 to 45 minutes, I went to a different room with about 2-4 different pharmacists &/or PGY1 residents. There, they each proceeded to ask me various questions, such as the ones below. I generally received different interview questions from each of the programs, with the exception of “Tell me about yourself,” “Why did you choose to apply here?” & “What are your strengths/weaknesses?” Make sure to have questions for them prepared because they always leave time for that at the end.

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Why did you want to do pharmacy?
3. What do you like to do for fun?
4. What brought you here to ... city?
5. Why did you choose ... hospital/residency? ... What about our program made you apply here?
6. Why do you want to do a residency?
7. What are your areas of interest and why?
8. What specifically do you hope to take away from a residency program?
9. What specific goals do you have for next year? (i.e. specific things to work on – e.g. presentation skills, kinetics, etc.)
10. What are your goals in 5 years, 10 years, long-term? ... What do you see yourself doing?
11. What do you think you can do for our program/pharmacy to help influence it in the future? ... How will you be remembered?
12. How are you different from other candidates? ... What sets you apart?
13. What would you implement for pharmacy that we don't already have here, and what rationale would you give to support yourself to me?
14. Can you explain what you would do to explain something to a physician? ... to a patient?
15. How do you relate to/work with patients? ... with physicians?
16. How would you approach a physician if you didn't agree with him? ... What if the situation could put the patient's safety at risk? ... What if the resident or first person you talked to still didn't agree with you?
17. Tell me about a boss/place of employment you had that you did not like. ... What about that person/place did you not like?
18. Tell me about a challenging situation you were faced with and how you dealt with that situation.
19. Tell me about an instance when you were dealing with an unhappy patient and how you reacted.
20. How do you accept criticism?
21. What do you think your biggest challenge will be during your residency year?
22. What types of criticism have you received on your rotations? ... And, how have you improved?
23. What are your strengths? ... weaknesses? ... challenges for next year?

24. Are you self-motivated?
25. What is your motivation for succeeding?
26. Tell me about an accomplishment you are proud of.
27. If you had to brag about yourself, and it was ok, what would you want people to know about you?
28. What would you do if you had someone in your group who wasn't helping or doing their part? ... not motivated?
29. Tell me about a time you worked in a group/team. ... What was your role?
30. Are you a leader? ... Tell me what you look for in a leader. ... What do you see as the definition of leader?
31. ... You keep mentioning the word "delegate." ... How do you delegate tasks? ... What does this word mean to you?
32. You are going to be working with other residents next year. What qualities would you like them to have?
33. How do you manage your time?
34. Tell me about a time when you failed to meet a deadline. What did you do? ... As a resident, you will be under a lot of pressure and have a lot of last minute deadlines and you won't be able to meet all of them.
35. During your residency year, you are going to have a lot of projects and things all due at once, what are you going to do?
36. When you are staffing as the pharmacist in charge, you are going to have a lot of problems come up at once. What are you going to do? (E.g. if the Pyxis machines all shut down; someone punched out late; drug info questions; people problems; out of a medication)
37. How do you balance your time, and what do you do to relieve stress/stay sane?
38. How do you learn best? ... Tell me how you prefer to learn.
39. What do you look for in a preceptor?
40. What do you hope your preceptors would do to best help you learn?
41. What have you gained from your rotations?
42. What was your favorite rotation and why? ... least favorite rotation and why?
43. Tell me about an intervention you made/are proud of.
44. Tell me about another intervention. (Note: Interviewer wanted specifics)
45. Tell me about an intervention you made that wasn't accepted. ... What could you have done better/differently if you felt it was important.
46. Tell me about a time when you had to work on a project and you weren't interested in it.
47. What has been the most challenging part of your rotation year?
48. Can you explain your most memorable patient?
49. Tell me about a time when you feel you made a positive impact on a patient.
50. What specifically did you do at your internships? ... How much time was spent making IVs?
51. We're always looking to improve systems. Tell me about a process/system you implemented.
52. Can you tell me about ... presentation you did? What was the outcome? What was your conclusion? ... OR ... I am interested in ... presentations you did. What can you tell me about them? What were the outcomes?

53. So, what kind of research did you do? (I.E. Explain ... on your CV.)
54. Tell me about your ... trip.
55. Can you tell me what you gained from ... conference you attended? ... What did you take away from the conference and implement later?
56. Tell me about some community service you have done.
57. What sets you apart from other candidates?
58. Do you have any concerns about the residency?
59. What is one fear you have about a residency?
60. If you were CEO of a company and could select anyone to sit on your board, who would it be and why?
61. What would you do if you couldn't do pharmacy?
62. If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?
63. If you were stranded on an island and could only have 3 drugs, which 3 specific drugs would you pick and why?
64. (Jar of pennies in front of me.) Pull out a penny. Turn it over. Tell me about yourself in that year (1993).
65. (Picture of Mount Rushmore.) Can you tell me what this is a picture of and where it's located? ... Who are the faces here? ... Why do you think they were selected to be carved? ... What do they represent? ... If you could carve the face of one influential person in your life next to them, who would it be and why? ... Now, if we were to carve your face next to them, what would you want to be remembered for?
66. What is one memorable thing about you that isn't on your CV that I should know about you? How can I remember you?
67. (Four candy bars in front of me.) Which candy bar would you be and why?

68. WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR ME?

69. PRACTICE NON-FORMULARY PAGER CASE – for a hospital with a restricted formulary and many protocols and order sets. (I.e. if a physician wants to use a medication not on the formulary, they have to page the pharmacist holding the non-formulary pager.) ... EXAMPLE QUESTION
- a. Physician: "I want to use XYZ drug in a pediatric patient. Can you approve it for me and tell me how to dose it?" (Note: The drug is a chemo agent for ___ cancer.) (I had never heard of it before.)
 - b. What reference would you use to look up studies of the drug in ___ cancer? ... (Only one study came up, and it was used in adults. ... The study showed 60% efficacy.)
 - c.(The other alternatives were already used, and the patient failed them. The patient only has hours.)
 - d. ... (The kinetics of the drug are as follows)
 - e. ... (It is the only drug in its class.)
 - f. ... Who would you refer to or ask for help from?
 - g. "I would approve it."