USMLE Study Tips #3
July 2007

1. What do you wish you had known last year when you were in the audience?
   It’s fun! It really isn’t that bad! You’ll be surprised how prepared you are for the clerkships.

2. How did you figure out the ‘culture’ in each clerkship?
   It only takes a few days on a service to figure out what the team dynamics are and what the
culture of a clerkship is. You’ll just know.

3. How did you figure out call rooms, scrubs, etc.
   Usually it’s in the information packets you get the first day or they tell you during
orientation.

4. How did you maintain your sanity (or did you)?
   Keeping up with my family relationships and commitments. You were a person with a life
prior to coming to medical school, it’s important to remember that.

5. What was the most fun?
   I really enjoyed the venting sessions with other students on my track and hearing everyone’s
stories. Especially during surgery and psych.

   Also, when I really connected with a patient and felt that I developed a meaningful
relationship with him/her. Remember, to go talk to the patient when you have free time.
This is why most of us went into medicine.

6. What did you do, or see others do, when things went wrong? successful strategies?

   Successful Strategies
   1. Organization is one of the keys to success in your third year. Figure out a strategy
      early by observing what others do and deciding what works best for you.

   2. Be enthusiastic and take care of your patients, that’s why you’re there!

   3. Read, Read, Read. At the beginning of the third year, you will feel like you know a lot
      because you just took the boards, but you have to keep reading in order to retain that
      information and increase your knowledge base. It might seem overwhelming, but just
      pick one topic a night that is relevant to your patient (it’ll help you retain it better),
      print out an UptoDate article on it and read that.

   4. Get feedback early and often!

   5. Keep an open mind about every rotation. Go into it as if that’s what you want to do
      with your career. You’ll be more successful!

   Unsuccessful Strategies:
   1. Being late - although, if you have a legitimate excuse, you’ll be fine.

   2. Only worrying about your grades.

7. How did you ask for feedback?
   Ask for specifics! Many people will try to get away with just saying you’re doing a good job,
   but it’s important to specifically ask for what you could improve on!
8. What was your best pocket guide?
   Pocket Medicine
   Sanford Guide
   Pharmacopoeia
   Maxwell Quick Medical Reference
   You don’t have to get a palm! If you’re not already using one, you probably wont use it
during your clerkships.

9. How did you feel a member of the team?
   Knowing information on your patient makes you feel like a member of the team, because it
always looks impressive to have the latest lab value or the results of a study. Also, if you
read about your patient’s problem you may be able to add to the diagnostic workup.

10. What should you listen closely for during orientation?
    The names of people to contact for questions/concerns, deadlines or additional
assignments, call room information and general expectations for call.

Good luck on your clerkships!!