

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 won't 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!!