

USMLE Study Tips #4 July 2007

1. What do you wish you had known last year when you were in the audience?

- the importance of organization in a clinical setting - how to keep labs, vitals, to do list/plan on a patient on hand and in a useful format. i thought i was organized prior to 3rd yr... not so much or maybe different type of organization. anyway, finding your own way to organize information early (or using the www.medfools.com stuff) makes the learning a lot more enjoyable.

4. How did you maintain your sanity (or did you)?

- i biked up the hill every day, even in winter during surgery. was awful at times, but it did give me a physical outlet when there wasn't time for another.

5. What was the most fun?

- pediatrics. only orientation where you get play-doh. it continues from there...

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

- I saw a bit of complaining and people trying to find a way to make it someone else's fault... though some students will commiserate w/ you, for the most part, that mode of dealing with difficulty seems less productive in the long term than figuring out how you could improve or do it differently next time. There are, of course, some situations where it really is the other person's fault - I think assuming "dumb, not mean" is a very helpful strategy in those instances.

7. How did you ask for feedback?

- i asked very specifically: how would you have done that presentation differently? I think asking how they would have done it differently works well b/c it avoids the "you're doing fine" response to some extent and gives you insight into their thinking process (if they have one!).

Getting feedback from your classmates! - what can I do better - was one of the most useful things I thought b/c if done with honesty and respect, it contributes to collegiality and forces you to think critically as a group (and they are not grading you and may be more honest).