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250 Biggest Mistakes 3rd Year Medical Students Make and How to Avoid Them

By Samir P. Desai, Rajani Katta



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Learn the secrets that set apart the honors from the average medical student. Some students excel in their clinical clerkships, while others remain average. What sets apart these top students? This book was written with the express intent of answering that question. Compiled from discussions with hundreds of faculty, residents, and students, along with extensive review of the scientific literature on the subject of medical education, this book is an invaluable resource.



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Editorial Review

From the Publisher

Every year, there are students who consistently perform at a high level during their third year of medical school. What enables these students to succeed? What limits the success of their colleagues? Is there something that sets these top performers apart from the rest?

This book was written with the express intent of answering these questions. Compiled from discussions with hundreds of faculty, residents, and students, along with extensive review of the scientific literature on the subject of medical education, you will find this book to be an invaluable resource.

Inside, find the answers to the following questions -

*Residents and attending physicians use different criteria to evaluate students. What criteria do they value more highly?

*What type of student do attending physicians enjoy?

*A study looking at "difficult" students, from the standpoint of attending physicians, found that the shy, or nonassertive student, was one of three major problem types. What are the other major problem types?

*The literature has shown that students are rarely observed performing a history and physical. That being the case, how do attending physicians evaluate a student's ability to perform this task?

*The clinical evaluation of students during rotations is far from perfect. Evaluators can be affected by a variety of factors, some of which may lead to ratings that are lower than the student deserves. What are these factors and what can you, as a student, do to increase the chances that you are evaluated fairly?

*Students are not able to do their best work until they become comfortable in their new rotation. What can you do to become more comfortable sooner rather than later?

*Personality factors have been shown in several studies to impact a student's evaluation. In one study, an important identifiable personality factor was identified that impacted evaluations. What was this factor?

*Conflict is a major issue for students in the clinical years. One study found that conflict situations were common, occurring on average every other day. What is the best way to handle conflict?

*Letters of recommendation are a key component of the residency application. When should you ask faculty members for a letter?

Featuring discussion of these issues and more, this book will provide you with essential insights and tools into mastering clinical rotation.

About the Author

Samir Desai, M.D., has advised and mentored many medical students and residents during his time as a faculty member in the Department of Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine. He is also the author of the popular *The Residency Match: 101 Biggest Mistakes And How To Avoid Them*, a book that shows applicants how to avoid commonly made mistakes during the residency application process. As the editor of the Clerkship Mistake Series, he has worked with a variety of educators to develop books that help students perform at a high level during clinical rotations. Together with Lexi-Comp, he developed the Clinician's Guide Series, a series of books that provide clinicians with practical approaches to commonly encountered problems. Within this series is the best-selling *Clinician's Guide to Laboratory Medicine* which provides a step-by-step approach to lab test interpretation.

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Mistake # 214 - Relying too heavily on self-assessment

As a physician, you will have few, if any, formal evaluations of your performance. Therefore, you will need to rely on your self-assessment skills. Unfortunately, studies have demonstrated that the self-assessment skills of medical students are lacking. Students need to improve in this area, and you can begin by asking yourself the following questions:

- * What did I learn?
- * Was I an engaged listener during rounds?
- * Did I ask enough questions?
- * What questions was I unable to answer?
- * What feedback did I receive about my oral case presentation, write-up, progress note, etc.?

Even though educators emphasize the importance of self-assessment, several studies have cast doubt on the accuracy of students' self-assessment. In a study examining the accuracy of self-assessment among 130 medical students, students were asked to complete a self-assessment form at the end of their anesthesiology rotation (Sclabassi). Their self-assigned grades were then compared to their teachers' evaluations to determine the degree of agreement. The results showed that only 4.6% were in general agreement.

In another study, 47 medical students at the Lehigh Valley Hospital were asked to assess themselves at the end of their Obstetrics/Gynecology rotation in the following areas (Weiss):

- * Fund of knowledge
- * Personal attitude
- * Clinical problem-solving skills
- * Written/verbal skills
- * Technical skills

These self-assessments were then compared to their final clerkship grades in each of the above areas. The results demonstrated poor agreement between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment in the areas of global fund of knowledge, personal attitudes, and clinical problem-solving skills.

The results of these two studies suggest that students' self-assessment during a clerkship is not accurate in predicting how residents and faculty will evaluate them. Therefore, students should not rely on self-assessment alone. Rather, they should solicit feedback from their evaluators to more accurately determine their own strengths and weaknesses.

Users Review

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