Fellow Recruitment
Basics and Lessons Learned

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Objectives

• Basic overview of the process
• Tips and guides for success
The Truth

• The Program Director and Program Coordinator are the only ones truly responsible for the process. (and the only ones paying attention)

• You are a team!

• Look around at successful programs and ask them how they do it.

• You are salesmen, selling your program.
  – You must sell reality, warts and all, or you will have unhappy trainees.
To Do List

• Update FREIDA information (winter, spring)
• Register for ERAS (email in the spring)
• Download ERAS Workstation
• Frequently check ERAS mailbox during season
• Register for NRMP (including participation)
• Enter Quota for NRMP (deadline 2 weeks before Rank List due)
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<th>Subspecialty</th>
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<th>Match Begins</th>
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Collect Your Data

• How many spots do you have?
• What kind of candidate are you looking for?
• What kind of candidate can you attract?
• What kind of program are you building?
• What are your strengths as a program?
• Is there funding to pay for any piece of recruitment (travel, dinner, lunch etc...)

These discussions should include your division chief, chair, core residency PD.
Collect Your Data

• Are you in a pediatric specialty that uses NRMP?
  
  Hematology Oncology
  Child Abuse
  Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics
  Critical Care
  Emergency Medicine
  Nephrology
  Rheumatology
  Cardiology
  Endocrinology
  Gastroenterology
  Infectious Diseases
  Pulmonology
  Neonatology
  Adolescent Medicine

• Are you in a pediatric specialty that does not use NRMP?
  
  General Pediatrics
  Hospital Medicine
  Sports Medicine
Define Your Criteria

• Some data are on the NRMP site
  – What residency is required to apply
• The new common requirements might limit this residency to a US or Canadian site
• Some of these are specific to your institution or program. You have to have a recruitment policy in place
  – Visas? (understand the nuances of visa categories)
  – Number of Letters of Recommendation
  – Score thresholds etc.
Planning Recruitment Season and Interview Day

• Know your ERAS and NRMP timelines
• When will you begin interviews?
• When will you interview? (day of week?)
• How many at a time?
• Lunch? Tour?
• How long for each interview?
• Who should interview?
• Do you have any data from last season’s applicants about areas of improvement?
• All your Key Stakeholders available?
How to manage the applications

• ERAS
  – Built in features for tracking applications, interviews, correspondence etc..
  – Print to PDF feature

• Excel
  – Allows for spreadsheet approach to data
  – Sort and track numeric data
  – Hyperlink to application file on your hard drive
  – Use color formatting of cells for easy view
Grouping Applicants Before Interviews

• Do Not Invite (DNI)
  – Don’t meet basic criteria for your program

• Group 1
  – Top applicant to your program, you want them in your program. Invite immediately...
  – Usually very easy to pick out.

• Group 2-3
  – Gradation of applicants
  – Often the toughest group to differentiate and also the largest group.
  – Depending on your applicant pool size, you may or may not invite some or all of these groupings.
Prepare Your Faculty

• Enlighten them as to program areas of improvement and current plans to address them.
• Perhaps give them ideas of types of questions to ask
  – Ask them to let you know if they plan to use Behavior Based Interview techniques.
• Remind them of things not to address with candidates (these have absolutely nothing to do with their candidacy).
  – Family planning, sexual orientation, religious affiliation
• Remind them not to “promise” things, have them refer to you as PD for the answers.
  – Funding for advanced degrees
  – A spot in the program
  – Funding for travel etc...
Prepare Your Fellows

• Ask them to speak honestly with candidates about the program
• Review the areas of improvement under way in your program.
• Ask them to emphasize the solutions that have been implemented or are ongoing for any concerns the fellows have.
Interview Day

• Begins before the interview day
  – Contact applicants in advance to find out about their research or clinical interests to help tailor their interview day

• Make sure the day is full, i.e. no extended periods of downtime where the applicant is not interfacing with your program

• Anticipate the “issues” or “concerns” applicants might have. Address these up front in person as the PD. No enterprise is perfect!
Interview Day

• **Sell Your Program**
  – Have an organized veneer
    • Give them their exact itinerary that morning (not before) in case there are last minute changes needed
    • Print name tags with their name and residency site
      – Put your institution logo on it, it’s a souvenir!
    • Make sure the schedule flows and is complete with no gaps. Have a back up plan if something goes wrong.

  – **Provide a positive experience**
    • Positive interviewers
    • Empower your faculty to answer the tough question about your “issues” as a program, it will provide a positive experience where you are demonstrating the solution.
Interview Day

• Sell Your Program
  – Try to provide something that is unique or unusual about your program to give the applicant something to compare against others.
    • This requires learning something about both your program and your competitors.
      – Faculty composition, clinical emphasis, research program etc.
  – DO NOT speak ill of other programs. Looks petty and is counter productive.
    • But emphasize what you do well and what you are “known for”.

Interview Day

• Sell Your Program
  – Have a “wrap up” period.
    • Review all the talking points of your program
    • Make sure their last memory of your program is the list of why features that should lead them to choose you.
    • Use this time to answer questions.
      – Ask them if they have any questions about the current fellows’ concerns.
        » Try listing things the fellows might have said and respond to them
  – Escort them out of your office space to the elevator, door etc...
Get Evaluation Data

• You need some sort of evaluation from your faculty/fellows/coordinator about the candidates
  – I use a Four tiered system with a comments box.
    • Top Third to DO NOT RANK (DNR)
    • I average these scores and then include that on my excel sheet
  – PDF created specifically for each candidate with photo and some data about their CV.

• The longer you wait, the less people remember.
Post Interview Day

• Follow up with the applicant
  – Mail. Letters are great and they get few. Thank them for coming to visit.
  – Email. Quick note of thanks. Less personal than a letter.
  – Phone. I call people towards the end of the season to review any questions they have after visiting other programs.
    • They get the talking points again.

• Encourage the fellows or other faculty to follow up
Ranking

• Begin with the DNR group.
• Use some method of creating an initial ranking list.
  – It is easier for people to make suggestions about an existing list than to create one from scratch.
  – I use the numeric faculty interview ranking score as a start.
• Enlist all stakeholders in the process.
  – I tell faculty they can’t complain about fellows if they are not part of the interview and ranking process.
NRMP

• Do not miss the deadlines.
  – Anticipate computer foul-ups and technical issues.
  – Give yourself a buffer.

• Do not put anybody on your list you wouldn’t actually want. They might come...

• I personally enter the list.

• Triple check your list before certifying.
  – Read the instructions after you modify the list, it has to be “Certified” to be final.
Post-Match

• Post-match survey of applicants
  – The people on your rank list that were above your matched candidates
  – Ask for feedback about your program
    • What could be improved.
    • What was an issue
    • How was the interview day, structure.
  – I do this by email and start off with a bit about how happy I am for them and what a great candidate they were.
Tips for Success

• Dinner at a faculty house
• Packet about your program and city
• Get your website up and running. Keep it current. Think of including materials for applicants to review/read about your program.
• Ideas from the group?