

Examples of Applicant Responses to Inappropriate Interview Questions

Interviewer Questions	Sample Applicant Responses
"I see that you are in a couple's match. Are you planning on having a family soon?"	"Yes, we're in a couple's match, but our decision about whether or not to start a family won't affect my training."
"I see that you are married. Are you planning to have kids?"	"Yes, we are thinking about kids but I do not anticipate this will influence my performance during training."
"I see that you graduated from a foreign medical school. What do you think about the current events back home?"	"My medical experience outside of the US will allow me to bring a richness of experience and diversity of thought to your program. I am focusing on entering a program right now, as opposed to events back home."
"How would you rank our program compare to others?" or "What other programs are you ranking?"	"I'm still in the process of gathering information about programs, so I can't answer that question right now."
"It is now relatively late in the interview season. I think you would be perfect for our program. Where do you think you will place us on your rank list?"	"Thanks for your kind words. I need to look at all my notes before I commit to a rank order list"
"If you are really interested in our program, I think you should come back for a second look. Will you be coming back for a second look?"	"As you can imagine, my schedule is quite hectic during this time of the year, so I would have to look closely at my travel plans before I could commit to that."
"If you are really interested in the program, you should be sure to let us know that after interview day, even if the program policy indicates that communication isn't necessary."	"Thank you for that advice; I had not known that about this program."
"What geographical areas are you considering?"	"I'm keeping an open mind about locations. Ultimately, I want to find a program that matches my needs and interests, which is more important to me than just the location."
"Is there anything about your religion that would keep you from performing your clinical duties?"	"I can't think of any. In fact, I believe my faith makes me a better doctor."
"I see that you went to a Catholic school. I'm a Seventh-day Adventist. Do you think your school would admit me?"	"I don't know. As a student, I wasn't involved in final admissions decision-making."

“What other programs are you interviewing at?”

“I’m still waiting to hear back from some programs to decide where to interview. So, I can’t answer that question right now.”

What other programs have you interviewed at?

“I’ve been interviewing broadly at programs of different sizes and locations while I try to determine which one has the best fit for me, but I am very happy to be here today interviewing at your program as I go through the process.”
If they insist on asking the question again → “Many of your regional and national colleagues with similar programs, as you would expect for someone with my ERAS application.”
If they continue to insist on asking the question → “I’m sorry, but I would like to be judged by my performance during this interview as opposed where else I might have been interviewed, since I think our interview should focus on whether I am a good fit for YOUR program and whether YOUR program is a good fit for me.”