

ROTATION SUCCESS

Audition rotations: 7 tips for success

Arrive early, dress to impress and learn what else you can do to get the most out of your audition rotation.

By [ASHLEY ALTUS](#) EMAIL WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2017 WEDNESDAY, JUL. 26, 2017

Audition rotations are your time to impress potential residency programs and get glowing letters of recommendation. Following these seven tips from Jenny Kendall, DO, medical director for the HealthEast Spine Center in Maplewood, Minnesota, will help you stand out for all the right reasons during your audition rotation.

1. Arrive early

While your rotation may start at 8 a.m., it doesn't mean you should show up at 8 a.m.

Dr. Kendall suggests showing up approximately a half-hour before your day is supposed to start with your attending physician.

This gives you a chance to find parking, find out where you are supposed to be and meet staff. If possible, ask staff to print out a schedule for the day and for the following day. This is an easy way to get a leg up. If you know the types of patients you'll be seeing, you can study up on their conditions the night before.

2. Dress to impress

Wearing professional attire is always your safest bet. Some picky attending physicians might ask you go to home and change if you come in wearing scrubs.

"You can always change into scrubs, but you can't change into nicer clothes," Dr. Kendall says.

3. Be an active learner

Residency programs are looking for active and engaged learners.

"If you have to ask a question on what you can do, you're making your resident or attending do extra work," Dr. Kendall says. "Instead, be proactive and know what you can do to help out. It can really make you stand out."

Dr. Kendall also suggests reading every night as another way to take an active role in your own learning. This way, you are able to ask questions about your cases and have an informed dialogue with your attending physician.

4. Look for unique cases to write up as a case study

Having research experience and being published is the norm for students applying for residency, Dr. Kendall says.

During your audition rotations, look for opportunities to write up a case study.

5. Show initiative by creating a list of goals

Write a list of goals that you want to get out of an audition rotation. If you're going to an academic institution, there will probably be a formalized curriculum for your rotation, but it's still good to have some goals of your own.

Private attendings don't always have formalized training on precepting. Working together to create goals and having an open dialogue with your preceptor will let them know what skills you want to learn during your rotation.

"It makes you stand out, and it may give you a better rotation because you have clear expectations of what you want to accomplish in your time there," Dr. Kendall says.

6. Ask for a letter of recommendation early

If you'd like a letter of recommendation, let your attending physician know at the beginning of your rotation when you're discussing your goals. Some attendings have requirements students need to meet to qualify for a letter, so you'll want to know what the expectations are at the outset.

While it might seem counterintuitive, Dr. Kendall suggests getting letters of recommendation from doctors in different specialties than the one you plan on pursuing.

"It makes you stand out stronger if you have letters from different backgrounds because doctors know you have a genuine interest in medicine," she says. "There's a lot of overlap in different fields."

Talking about the letter of recommendation at the beginning of your audition rotation can also lead to the attending physician looking at your skills more carefully and finding ways to help you get the best experience you can.

7. Ask for the opportunity to give a presentation

Many academic rotations will require you to give a presentation, but if you're doing an audition rotation with a private physician, ask to give a presentation to his/her clinical staff.

If it is required you give a presentation, Dr. Kendall recommends asking an attending physician to go over your presentation with you before you deliver it. It's better to seek advice than to give a bad presentation.