

Question 1:

COTH Administrative Board Changes

On June 30, 2017, Dr. Randall Dei completed his term as COTH Chair. He remains the Region 3 Representative. Dr. Clint Lowery began his two-year term as Chair with Dr. Kerry Sweet serving as the new Chair-Elect effective July 1, 2017.

COTH also welcomed Dr. Steven Vyce as the new Region 6 Representative.

APMA Funds Pilot NBME Exam for Podiatric Medical Students



On June 1, the 2019 class of California School of Podiatric Medicine at Samuel Merritt University (CSPM) sat for the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) Comprehensive Basic Science Examination. APMA funded this pilot five-and-a-half-hour exam to aid in evaluating the education of podiatric physicians.

CSPM plans to use the outcomes for an introspective review of its curriculum, in keeping with the objectives of Vision 21st Century--to establish an educational curriculum consistent with that of allopathic and osteopathic physicians. A confidentiality agreement between APMA and NBME ensures that the results of the examination will be used only by CSPM in evaluating its curriculum. "CSPM is to be lauded for its commitment to evaluating and improving the educational process," said APMA President Ira H. Kraus, DPM.

New Assoc. Dean, College of Health Sciences and Director, Arizona School of Podiatric Medicine

Effective July 24, 2017, Dr. Jeffrey Page passed the baton to Dr. Jeffrey Jensen as the new Associate Dean, College of Health Sciences and Director, Arizona School of Podiatric Medicine (AZPOD). Dr. Jensen served as Dean of the Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine and has been its Director of Research for some time. Dr. Page noted that Dr. Jensen is a "man of vision with a "can do" attitude" and expressed his confidence that his "enthusiasm and positive outlook will be a welcome addition to the Board of AACPM."

Under the guidance of Dr. Page, AZPOD enrolled its first class in 2004 and has worked diligently to establish a pattern of excellence and high standards in podiatric medical education.

News from the Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME)

- CPME conducted its second meeting of the council's College Ad Hoc Committee on May 20. The committee is working on a comprehensive review and revision of the council's college accreditation documents.
- Work continues on the CPME Residency Portal. Plans are for residency programs to use the portal this fall for submission of pre-evaluation materials, progress reports, and applications.
- The Residency Review Committee conducted a conference call on May 8 to consider several items including an application for provisional approval for a PMSR/RRA with 2/2/2 positions. And, on-site teams conducted 10 residency on-site visits in late April and early May.



Do Interviews Really Make a Difference?

Not according to Jason Dana, Ph.D. and assistant professor of management and marketing at the Yale School of Management. Employers like to use free-form, unstructured interviews in an attempt to “get to know” a job candidate. Such interviews are also growing in popularity among admissions officers at universities who want to move away from test scores and other standardized measures of student quality. But, in an April 8 commentary in the New York Times, Dana reviewed the research on such “unstructured” interviews, including his own experiments, and concluded that they are worse than useless, since interviewers “typically form strong but unwarranted impressions” that can overwhelm better sources of information.

People who study personnel psychology have long understood this. In 1979, for example, the Texas Legislature required the University of Texas Medical School at Houston to increase its incoming class size by 50 students late in the season. The additional 50 students that the school admitted had reached the interview phase of the application process but initially, following their interviews, were rejected. A team of researchers later found that these students did just as well as their other classmates in terms of attrition, academic performance, clinical performance (which involves rapport with patients and supervisors) and honors earned. The judgment of the interviewers, in other words, added nothing of relevance to the admissions process. Dana believes they can be harmful and undercut the impact of other, more valuable information.

In one experiment, Dana et al had student subjects interview other students and then predict their grade point averages for the following semester. The prediction was to be based on the interview, the student’s course schedule and his or her past G.P.A. (We explained that past G.P.A. was historically the best predictor of future grades at their school.) In addition to predicting the G.P.A. of the interviewee, our subjects also predicted the performance of a student they did not meet, based only on that student’s course schedule and past G.P.A. In the end, our subjects’ G.P.A. predictions were significantly more accurate for the students they did not meet. The interviews had been counterproductive.

It gets worse. Though many of our interviewers were allowed to ask any questions they wanted, some were told to ask only yes/no or this/that questions. In half of these interviews, the interviewees were instructed to answer honestly. But in the other half, the interviewees were instructed to answer randomly. Specifically, they were told to note the first letter of each of the last two words of any question, and to see which category, A-M or N-Z, each letter fell into. If both letters were in the same category, the interviewee answered “yes” or took the “this” option; if the letters were in different categories, the interviewee answered “no” or took the “that” option. Strikingly, not one interviewer reported noticing that he or she was conducting a random interview. More striking still, the students who conducted random interviews rated the degree to which they “got to know” the interviewee slightly higher on average than those who conducted honest interviews.

There was a final twist in our experiment. We explained what we had done, and what our findings were, to another group of student subjects. Then we asked them to rank the information they would like to have when making a G.P.A. prediction: honest interviews, random interviews, or no interviews at all. They most often ranked no interview last. In other words, a majority felt they would rather base their predictions on an interview they knew to be random than to have to base their predictions on background information alone.

The key psychological insight here is that people have no trouble turning any information into a coherent narrative. This is true when, as in the case of my friend, the information (i.e., her tardiness) is incorrect. And this is true, as in our experiments, when the information is random. People can’t help seeing signals, even in noise. So great is people’s confidence in their ability to glean valuable information from a face to

face conversation that they feel they can do so even if they know they are not being dealt with squarely. But they are wrong.

What can be done? One option is to structure interviews so that all candidates receive the same questions, a procedure that has been shown to make interviews more reliable and modestly more predictive of job success. Alternatively, you can use interviews to test job-related skills, rather than idly chatting or asking personal questions.

Dana acknowledges that unstructured interviews aren't going away anytime soon. Until then, we should be humble about the likelihood that our impressions will provide a reliable guide to a candidate's future performance.

3,000 Year Old Wooden Big Toe

A 3,000-year-old wooden prosthesis was found attached to a female mummy in an ancient Egyptian grave site, the necropolis of Sheikh 'Abd el-Qurna close to Luxor. It is likely one of the oldest prosthetic devices in human history: Together with other experts, Egyptologists were able to show that the wooden toe was refitted several times to the foot of its owner, a priest's daughter. It testifies to the skills of an artisan very familiar with human physical characteristics which can be seen particularly well in the mobility of the prosthetic extension and the robust structure of the belt strap.



Do you know your COTH Regional Representative?

If you don't, reach out and introduce yourself. The Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH) oversees the administration of the CASPR and CRIP programs and associated websites. Your COTH Regional Representative wants to hear your feedback and about your activities and concerns. They are available to serve as a resource for you.

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