

## Smart Questions to Ask at Your Fellowship Interview

1. You should express your own career goals, specifically and ask what the goal or intent of the Fellowship is; to create an academic surgeon, a skilled clinical practitioner in private practice, a subspecialist (bariatric, foregut, colorectal, etc) or a general laparoscopic surgeon.
2. What were the jobs obtained and the career path taken by the prior fellows at each program?
3. Do I have access to the current fellows and recent graduates of the program?
4. Does the program have any licensing, board, or certification requirements?
5. Is the program fully accredited by the Fellowship Council? Are there program citations?
6. How will I be paid? Make sure you understand the source of funds (Grant, clinical work, other) and the stability of funds (is the grant guaranteed for the duration of the fellowship, is my salary dependent on my operative volume, is “moonlighting” permitted?).
7. Is the director seriously contemplating a move within the time period of the proposed fellowship?
8. Will there be funds available for my salary if the fellowship program director moves and I stay?
9. If I have to work at meetings, is my travel paid for?
10. Is a research project required?
11. Is there internal funding for research or do fellows need to write grants?
12. Do I take call as attending, and if I do, do I have backup?
13. What is the relationship with the residents? What is the relationship in the hierarchy (do residents or fellow get the 1<sup>st</sup> choice of cases)?
14. Will I be working with residents, and in particular, chief residents (any answer that involves working with the chief resident should be an immediate red-flag)?

15. How many attendings participate in the program and what are the director's expectations for rotation and division of fellows' time?
16. Do you have a lab facility where I can train on live models? Is there an animal lab in which I can conduct animal research projects?"
17. How much time is allotted for vacation?
18. What are my patient, research, clinical, and traveling responsibilities?
19. Can I rotate to another program for something not offered at this program?
20. How are cases distributed?
21. What is the case volume and what types of procedures do fellows do?
22. What would you consider to be the clinical and research strengths of the program?
23. How will the patients I accumulate on call be followed both during admission and after discharge?
24. Does the care of these patients ever conflict with the laparoscopic cases I would typically be performing?