Tips and tricks for MD-PhD applicants
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General
● Seriously consider your obligations if you are applying during senior year. You will miss classes and will need to be able to make work up. It can be hard and tiring. Many people do it and make it through, so it is not impossible. That being said, having an extra year of research under your belt from an enrichment year can never hurt either, especially at top schools.
● Keep in touch with schools. Well-timed update letters can be very helpful (if the school allows them). Be proactive, not reactive. Show initiative.
● Find your organizational style! For me, it was a giant excel spreadsheet. I would be more than happy to share it with you if that would be helpful.
● Reply promptly to emails and other communications from programs.

Applications
● Think about what lifestyle you want and this will help guide locations to apply. If location is important to you, then prioritize this in your applications.
● Early is always better when it comes to applications. As Wendy will tell you, there is a certain point at which you should just apply the following year and not do late applications for that year.
● Have others look over your essays to ensure that they are well written.
● After you have written a ton of essays, it becomes easy to lose enthusiasm in your writing.

Interviews
● Get reward cards for your favorite airlines/Amtrak, depending on where you applied.
● Have fun meeting awesome colleagues and faculty. You may even get to meet a leader in your field! All the people you meet on the interview trail will be your colleagues whether you go to same school or not.
● Do not be competitive at your interviews. You should just try and have fun with the people you meet because they are great people. No one likes the person who tries to “one up” others on everything or is mean.
● Know your research inside out and backwards. Be able to explain it from the big picture to the nitty gritty theory.
● Always send thank you notes to the people you interview with and those who help with the interview experience. You send these because it is the right thing to do, not because it will help you get in. Do not fret if you get no response.
● Most interviews, especially your research ones, are quite relaxed. That being said, I did get grilled a few times. It is research, and it is not the first or last time it will happen.
● Have a really good answer for why MD-PhD. You do not want to sound rehearsed but hopefully the first time you think of an answer to this is not at your first interview.
• Have a good reason for why an MD. Your med school interviews will be less interested in your research and more so in your desire to be a clinician.
• Enthusiasm is important!
• Have good reasons of why you want to attend that specific school.

Acceptances
• The MD/PhD waitlists move quite a bit. You may meet people who have acceptances to 6 top schools. They can only choose one school, opening up 5 waitlist spots. Thus, most of the movement occurs at the end of April and in May. I have even heard a statistic from one program director that about 125 students get their first acceptance in April, May, and June each year.

Other
• MD only interviews and acceptances tend to occur much earlier so do not fret that your MD only friends already have interviews or acceptances.
• Do not compare yourself to others. Everyone is doing awesome things and different schools look for different characteristics in applicants.
• Different schools have slightly different rules for how they do their admissions process. Play by their rules.