



How to Make your Rank Order List

The Rank Order List:

Congratulations! You have completed your fellowship interviews, and now comes the final hurdle of the application process prior to Match Day: the Rank Order List (ROL). The ROL is your chance to preferentially list the fellowship programs you have interviewed at and hope to continue your training with. There are several considerations and strategic approaches that can be utilized when creating your final ROL.

Overall, your goal should be to match into a fellowship program within which you are a good fit. The objectives and mission of the program should align with your own personal goals. It is important that the environment and culture of your fellowship program allow you to thrive and succeed.

Considerations When Making Your GI Fellowship Rank Order List:

Similar to residency, where you train for your GI fellowship will have an impact on how you practice in the future. Thus, when creating your rank order list there are several points to consider and ask yourself when assessing the programs:

1. What is the overall quality of the program?
2. Am I willing to move to this location?
3. Are there mentors who can help guide me?
4. Are there research opportunities?
5. Do they have training in the specific subspecialty that I am interested in (e.g. transplant hepatology, advanced endoscopy, inflammatory bowel disease, motility, etc.)?
6. What is their success rate for matching fellows into more advanced fellowships and/or jobs?
7. How happy are the fellows there? Are they people I would want to work with?
8. Does the program and location allow for a satisfactory work-life balance?

Who to Ask for Help with the Rank Order List:

Sometimes, you may not have all the answers to these questions after the interview day or need more information. Prior to making a final decision, it may be helpful to get more insight from:

1. A trusted mentor
2. Current GI fellows at your institution who have recently gone through this process.
3. Gastroenterology staff at your institution who can speak to the quality of other programs.
4. Current fellows at the institution you are interested in about their experiences there.

Ranking Fellowship Programs:

Ultimately, the matching algorithm attempts to place you into your most preferred program.

It is important to recognize that every program is tailored differently and what works for some people, may not work for others. In addition to the considerations and information you gained from interviewing, a “gut-feeling” can oftentimes go a long way. Try not to rank programs based on how you think they will rank you but rather rank programs that you ***genuinely want*** to go to.

Final Tips:

1. Do not mistake being “ranked highly” to mean that you will have a guaranteed spot at that institution.
2. If you are genuinely interested in a particular program, consider a “second look” to help make your decision.
3. Do not wait until the final day to create your ROL. The servers typically slow down the day before the submission deadline.
4. Finally, it is important to emphasize that the algorithm ***favours the applicant*** to match into the program of their choice. The way you rank programs does not affect your chances of matching. For example, an applicant ranked below you on a program’s rank list can only take your “spot” if you match into a higher program on your own list