

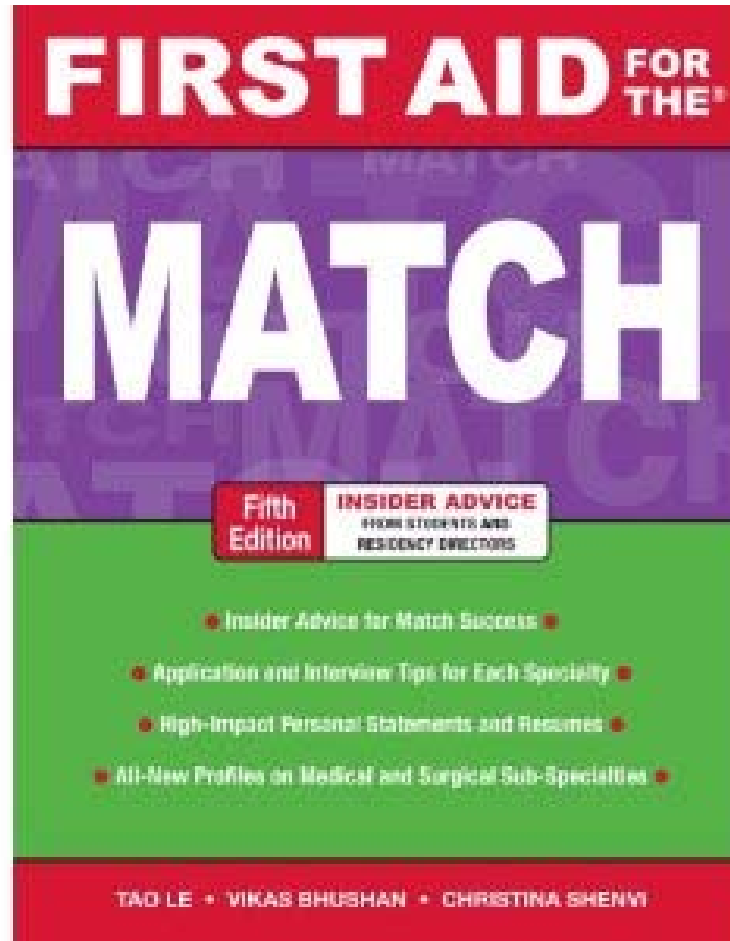
# First Aid for the Match: The Really Short Version

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**Senior Editor**  
**First Aid Board Series**  
**USMLERx Test Bank Series**

## Overview

- Common Match Mistakes
- Overview of the Match
- Planning the 4<sup>th</sup> year
- Choosing an Adviser
- The Application
- Interviewing
- Rank Lists



## Common Mistakes

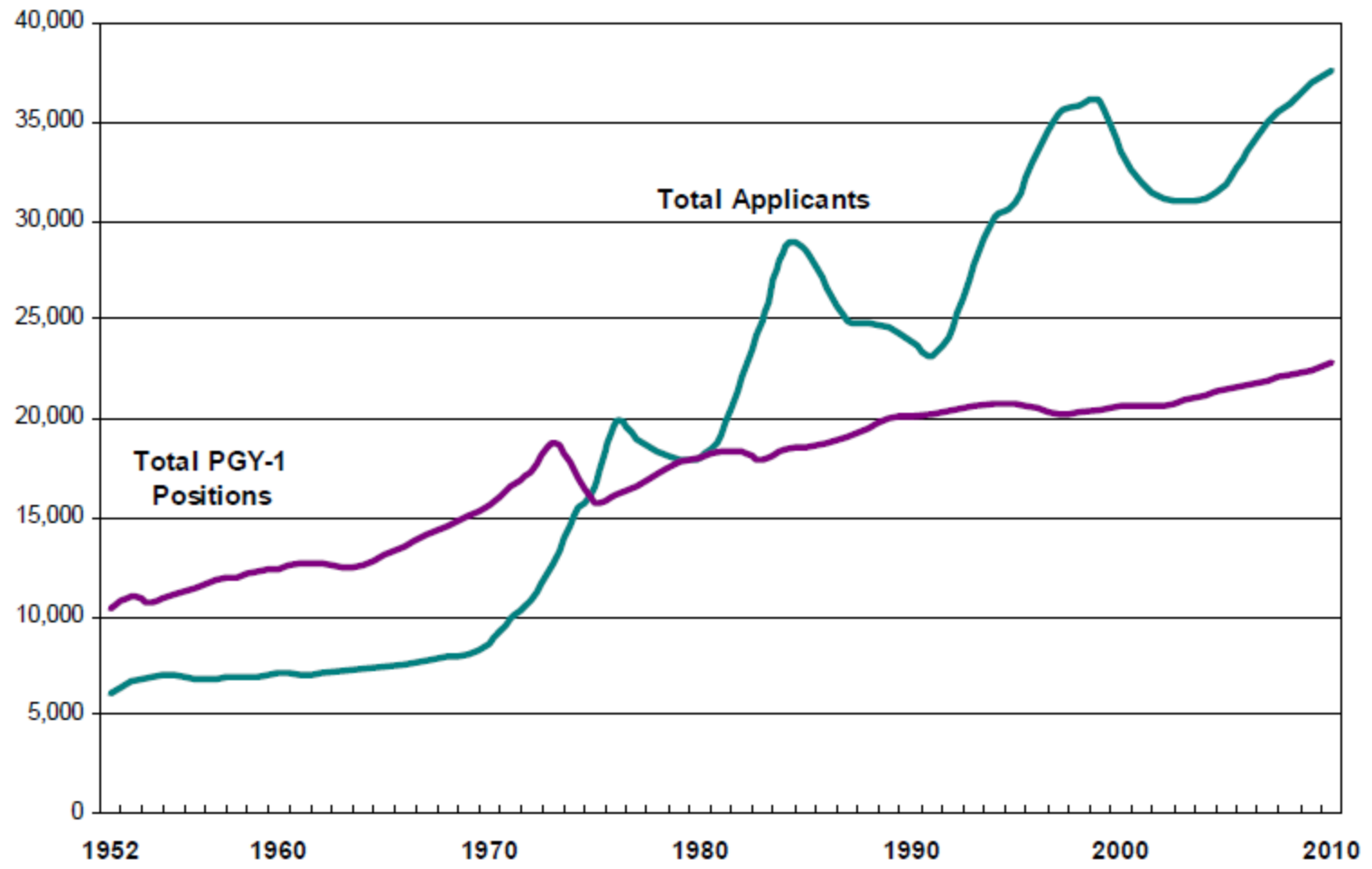
- 
- Choosing the wrong adviser
  - Applying without clear commitment to specialty choice
  - Writing a bad personal statement
  - Poor interview preparation
  - Not interviewing at enough programs
  - Ranking undesirable programs

## Find Your Match

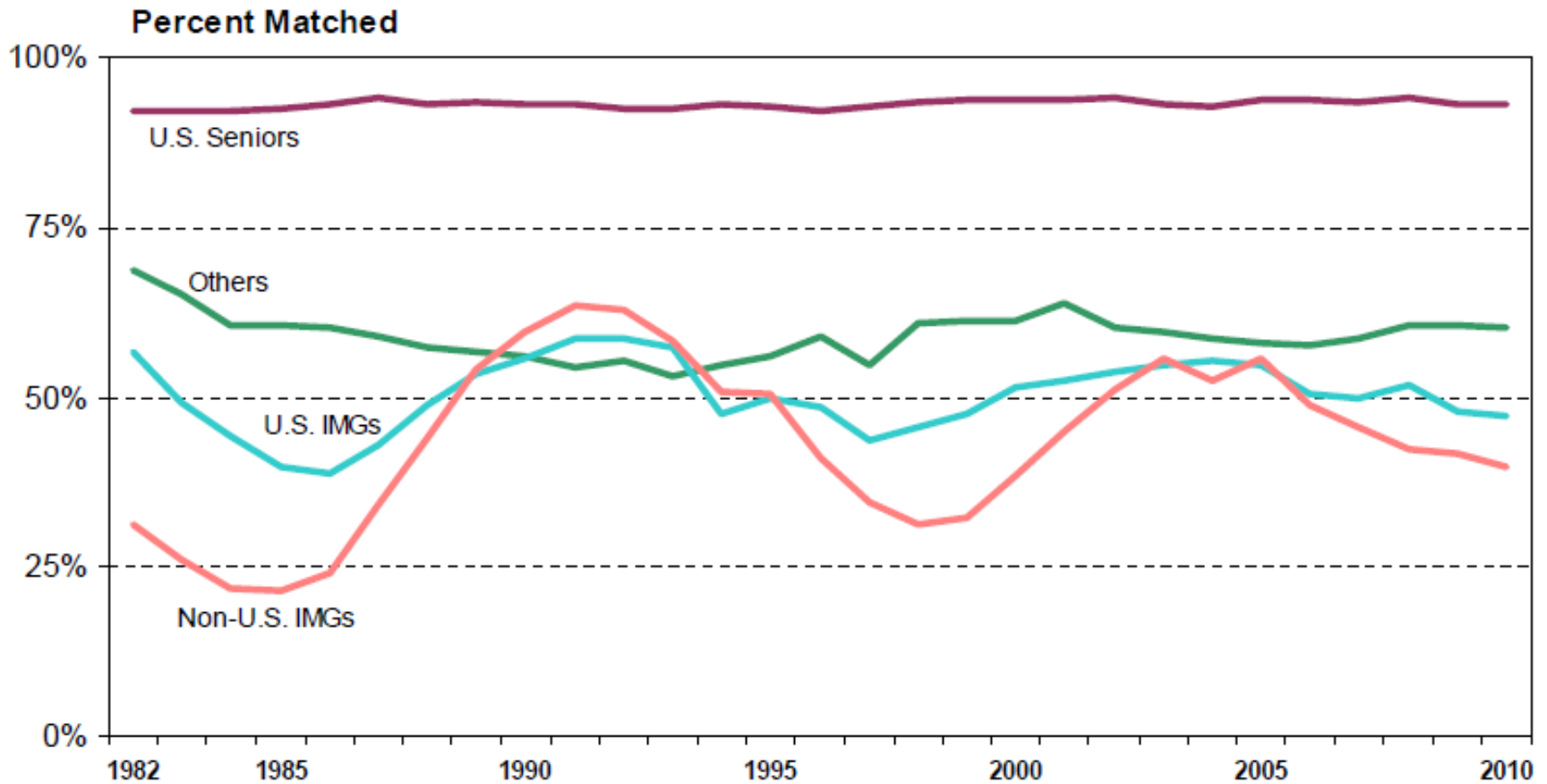


- NRMP
  - ◆ Couples
  - ◆ Shared-schedule
- SF Match
- Urology Match
- Osteopathic Match
- Armed Forces Match
- Canadian Match

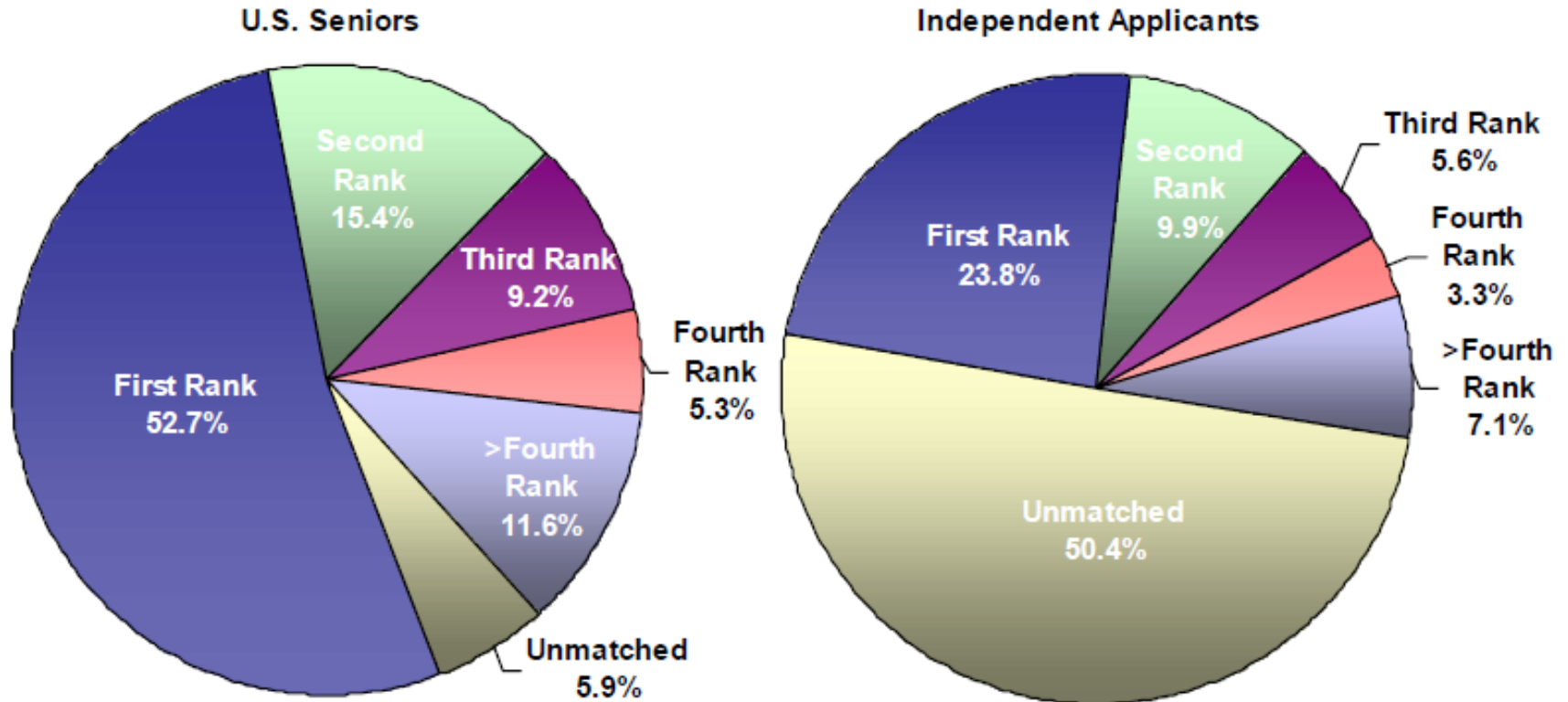
# Applicants and First Year Positions in the Match



# PGY-1 Match Rate

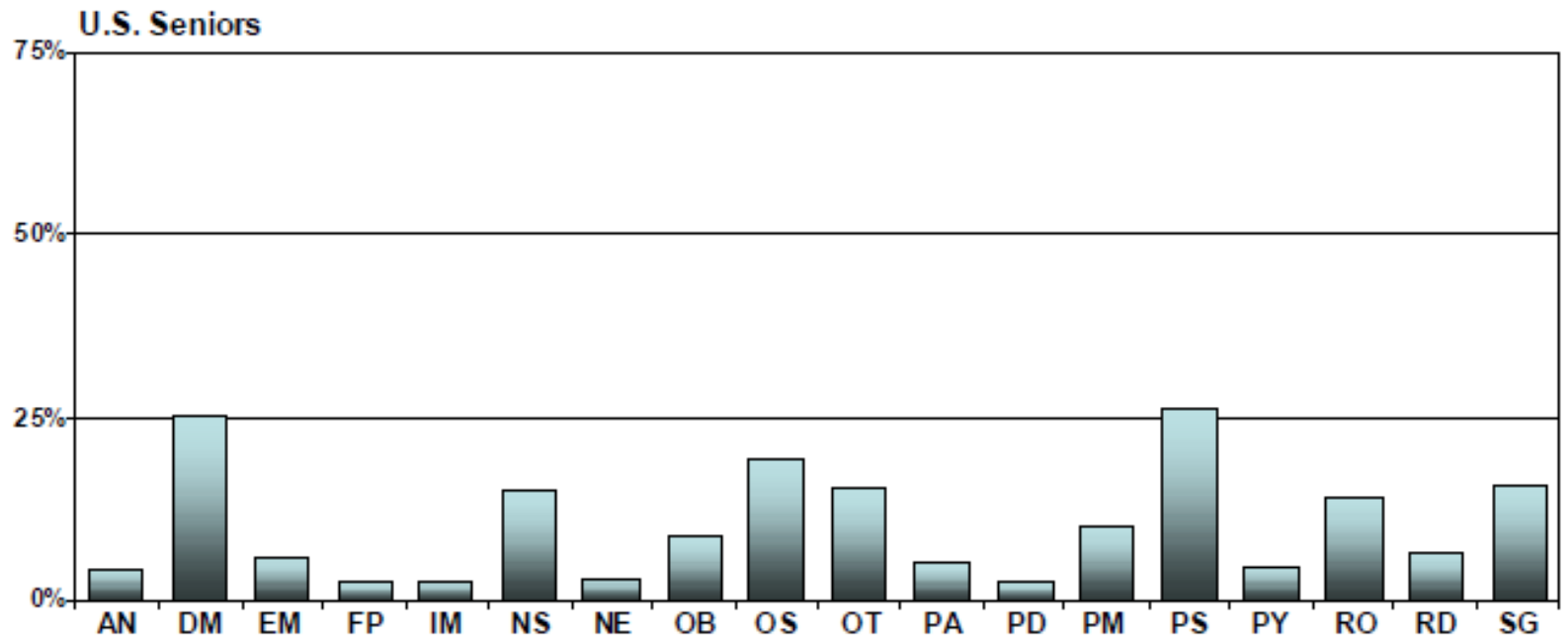


# Percent Matches by Choice





# Unmatch Rate by Specialty



## Jan – Mar: Get an Advisor Who Can

- 
- Discuss trends in the field
  - Point out research opportunities
  - Offer clear assessment of your competitiveness
  - Highlight programs appropriate for you
  - Review your application
  - Conduct a mock interview
  - Review your rank list
  - Make key calls for you

## Advisory Warning

**FIRS**

**MA**

- Overload: too popular to give enough attention
- Oversight: misjudges your fit or competitiveness for the field
- Nostalgia: has not kept up with the current state of the specialty match
- Bias: Gives you the same “pet” list of programs regardless

## Mar-Jun: Planning the Senior Year

**FIR**

**MA**


- **Sub-internships**
  - ◆ Early vs. late
- **Away or audition rotations**
  - ◆ Competitive program?
  - ◆ Competitive field?
- **Electives**
  - ◆ OB/Gyn → pediatrics
  - ◆ Ortho → EM, trauma surg

## Mar-Aug: Selecting a Specialty



- Multifactorial – aptitudes, personality, lifestyle, income
- Resources
  - ◆ FA Match: Chapter 4
  - ◆ AAMC Careers in Medicine
  - ◆ Pathway Evaluation Program
  - ◆ NRMP Results and Data 2011
  - ◆ NRMP Charting Outcome in the Match
  - ◆ NRMP Program Results, 2007-2011
- What if I can't decide?
  - ◆ Take a research year/ do add'l rotations
  - ◆ Do a prelim year

## Jul-Sep: Getting Info on Programs

- 
- Consult your advisor, faculty and house staff, dean of students, MS4 students
  - AMA FREIDA
    - ◆ AMA Graduate Medical Education Directory (“Green Book”)
    - ◆ Specialty directories
  - NRMP Program Results
  - Program websites/student forums


## What to Look for in a Program

**FIRS**

- Location, location, location
- Setting
- Stability
- Reputation
- Subspecialty strengths
- Educational environment
- Work environment
- Salary
- Benefits

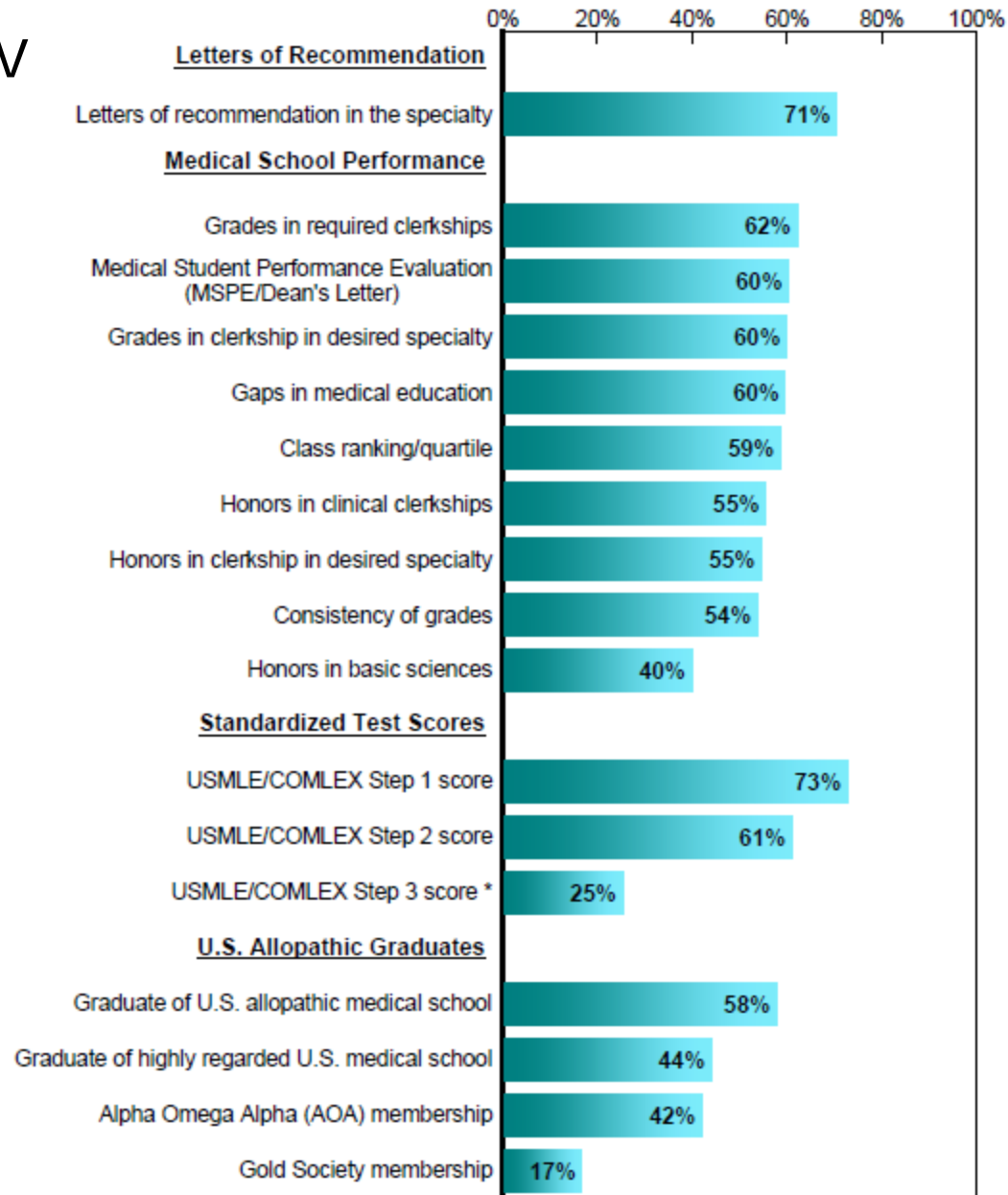
**MA**

## Application Elements

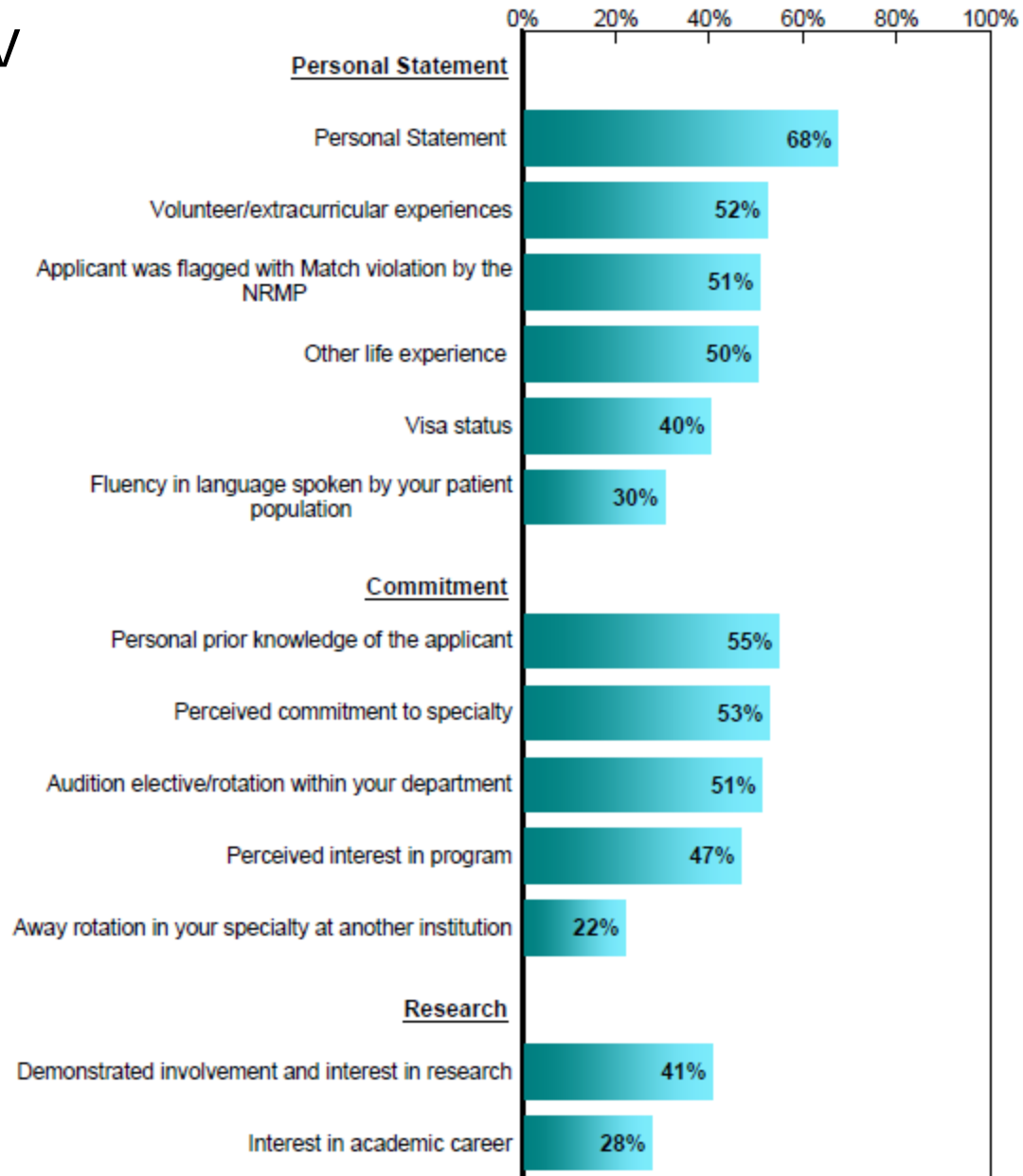
- 
- ERAS/program application
  - Dean's letter
  - Letters or recommendation
  - Transcript
  - CV
  - Personal statement



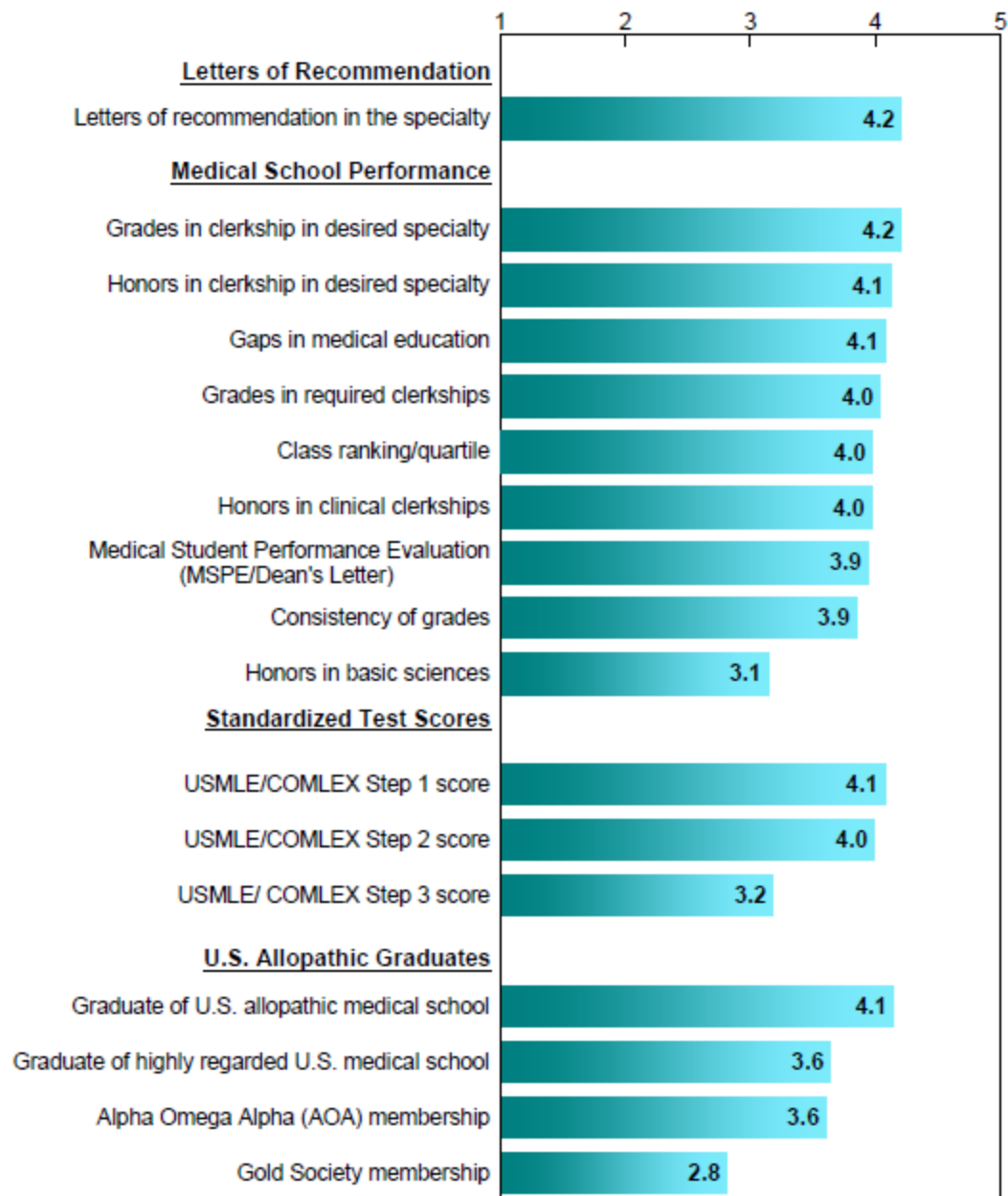
# Interview Factors



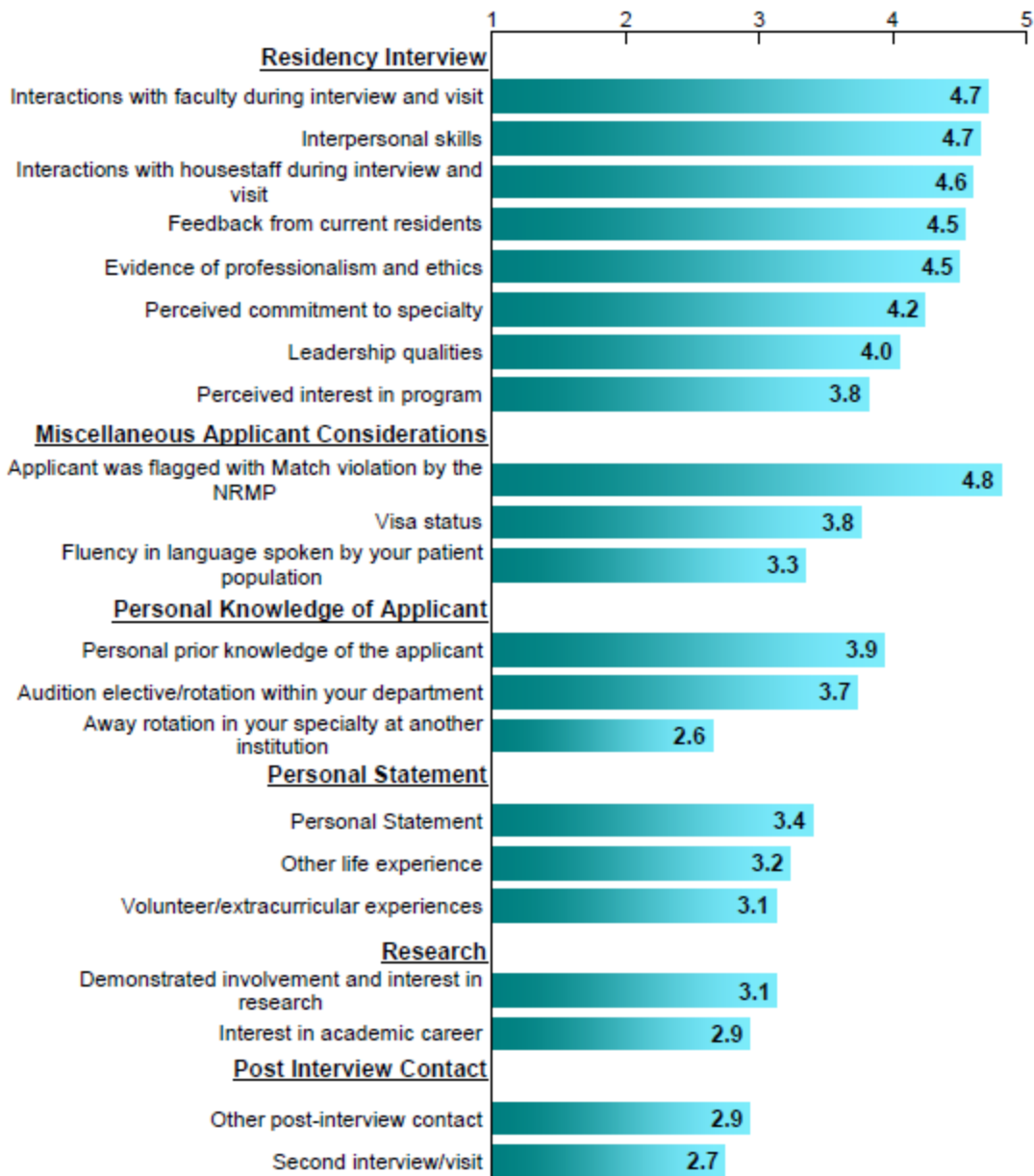
# Interview Factors



# Ranking Factors



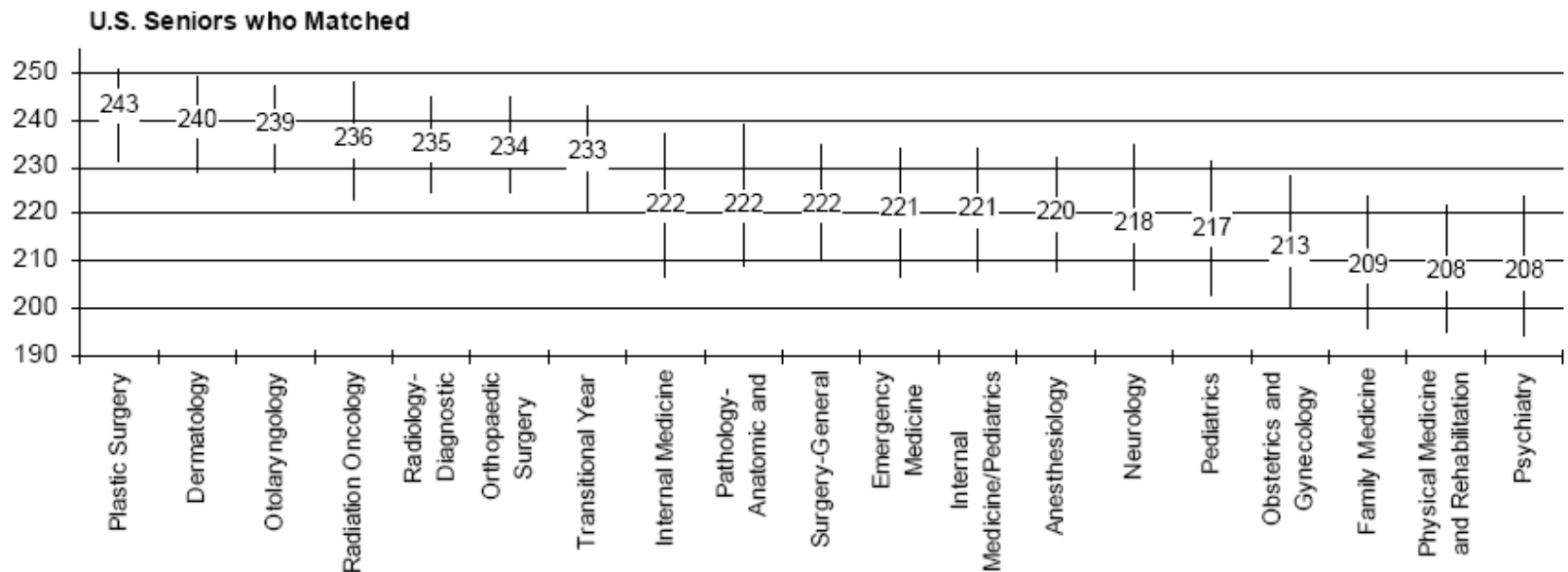
# Ranking Factors



# NRMP: Charting Outcomes in the Match

**Chart 10**

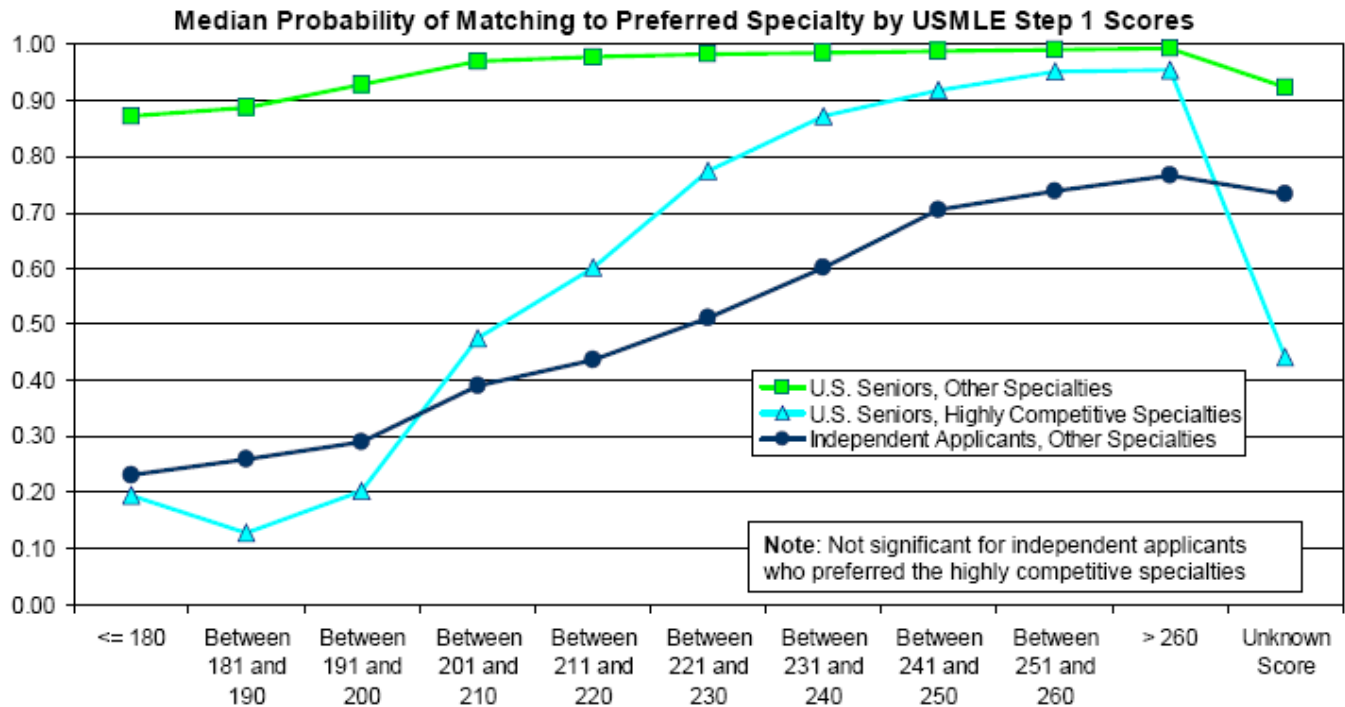
**USMLE STEP 1 SCORES OF MATCHED APPLICANTS BY PREFERRED SPECIALTY**  
*U.S. Seniors and Independent Applicants*



# NRMP: Charting Outcomes in the Match

**Chart 15**

## USMLE STEP 1 SCORES



## Aug-Sep: Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)


- Web-based application program from the AAMC
  - ◆ Fill out common application form
  - ◆ Create personal statement
  - ◆ Request letters of recommendations
  - ◆ Release USMLE transcript
- Application transmitted to designated residency programs
  - ◆ Up to 10 programs included
  - ◆ Escalating fees for add'l programs

## Jul-Aug: Dean's Letter

- Contains
  - ◆ Personal background information
  - ◆ Preclinical evaluations
  - ◆ Clinical evaluations
  - ◆ Special activities
  - ◆ Summary paragraph --Class rank, “adjective”
- Tips – meet with dean to review letter, edit if possible



## Jun-Jul: Letters or Recommendation Tips

- 
- Target letter writers who know you well, have worked with you clinically, are well-established in the field or are known at your top choices
  - Review evaluations before asking letter writer
  - “Do you know me well enough to write a strong letter?”
  - Meet letter writer to give rationale, background
  - Give letter writer 4 weeks


## Apr-Jun: CV Tips

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- Create CV for letter writers and to input into ERAS
- Organize categories to highlight strengths
- Use terse, precise, and vivid language
- Create parallel structure in lists
- Follow consistent punctuation, capitalizations rules
- Consider showing to a professional editor

## Apr-Jun: Personal Statement Tips

- 
- Start early
  - Study multiple examples – FA Match
  - Have an advanced draft for letter writers
  - Address your motivations and professional aspirations
  - Craft strong beginnings/endings
  - Have smooth transitions
  - Have it critiqued by adviser, others
  - Consider a professional editor

## Nov-Feb: Interview Tips

- 
- Schedule top interviews in the middle of the season
  - Do your homework on the program
  - Rehearse interviews and tough/inappropriate questions
  - Maintain high level of energy/focus throughout day
  - Have list of questions for interviewer
  - Send follow-up letters

## Feb: Rank List Tips

**FIRS**

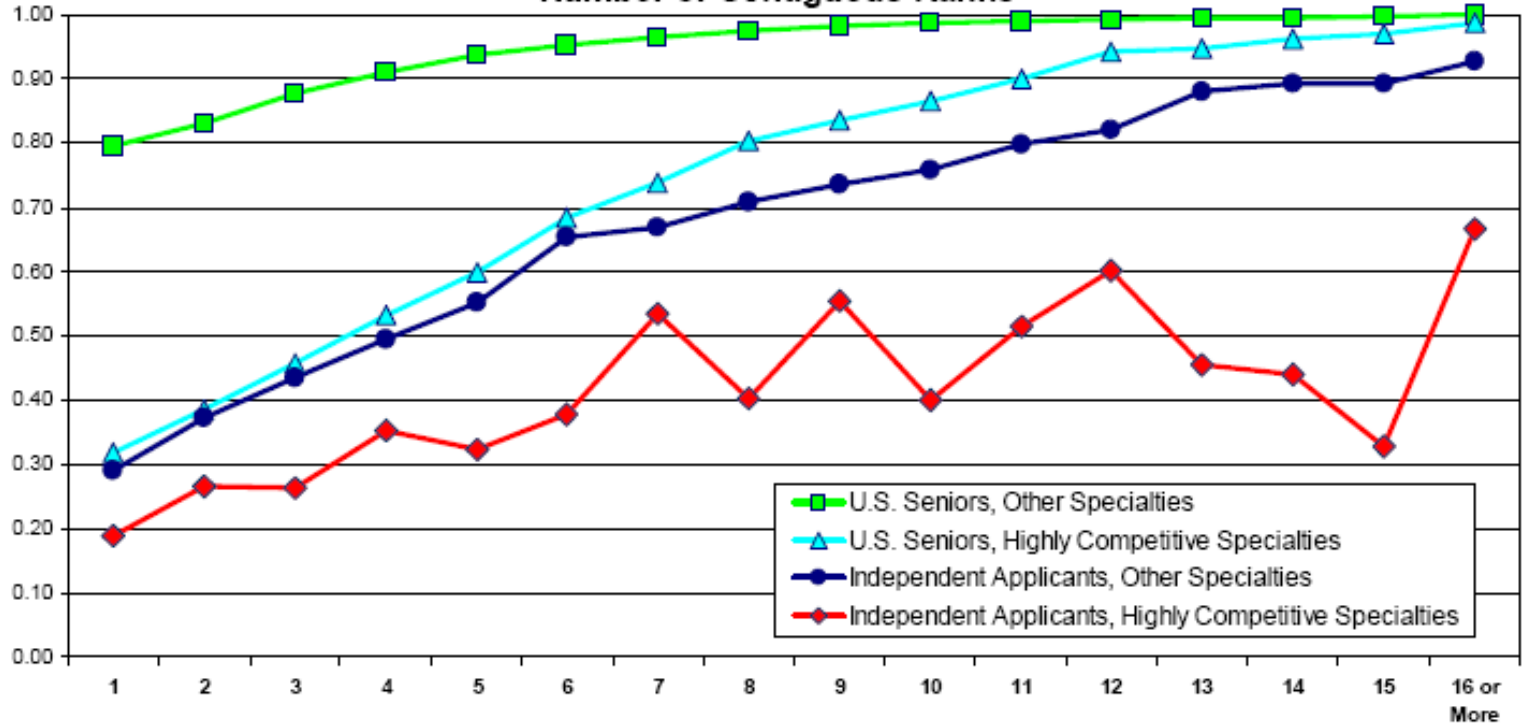
**MA**

- Rule # 1 – Rank programs in order of their desirability
- Rule # 2 – Rank all acceptable programs
- Do not let flattery affect your rank list
- Beware of under-the-table deals

**Chart 14**

**NUMBER OF CONTIGUOUS RANKS**

**Median Probability of Matching to Preferred Specialty by Number of Contiguous Ranks**



## Improving Your Chances of a Successful Match

- Realistically assess your competitiveness and that of the programs/field
- Interview at a sufficient number of programs
- Rank all programs acceptable to you
- If you aim for a very competitive specialty, have a backup