

PHARMD SPOTLIGHT



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1. What skills do you think are the most important for a pharmacy student to develop to become an excellent candidate for a fellowship?

Being resourceful but knowing it's okay to ask questions if you can't figure it out yourself. I think student pharmacists are trained with the mindset that they must know everything and be perfect. One mistake means a failing exam grade or a medication error. This is not the case. You do not need to be perfect and know everything. Rather than knowing everything and being a walking encyclopedia, being resourceful and unafraid to ask questions has proven far more useful in successfully obtaining a fellowship and being a fellow. If you don't know the answer to something you should first use your resources (notes, Micromedex, Lexicomp, Google, etc.). Give a good effort to do some research and try to figure it out. If you are stuck, instead of guessing the answer or freaking out, accept that asking for help and asking thoughtful questions is okay.

2. What about your current position fulfills the goals that inspired you to become a pharmacist in the first place?

I'm very fortunate to work in an extremely unique role as a pharmacist. Not only am I a pharmacy informaticist fellow, but I am one that works for an industry instead of a hospital. It's a very niche role that I didn't even know existed until my P₃ year. To back track, I felt very lost throughout pharmacy school. I didn't really know what I wanted to do, I didn't feel passionate about a certain disease state/career field, and I didn't really enjoy patient encounters. All I knew was that I went into pharmacy to help people. During this confusing time, I tried to explore every career path in pharmacy and stay open minded. What I learned from this is what I did care about, which is helping people by improving safety and making processes more efficient. And those are two main goals that my current position fulfills. By working with pharmacy data, I am able to contribute to our team's overall effort to automate pharmacies. By integrating technology and working to reach the autonomous pharmacy vision, I am indirectly contributing to making pharmacies a more enjoyable place for pharmacists and techs to work at.

3. What would you say to current pharmacy students who are eager to learn more about industry but are not convinced that it is the right career path for them?

I think the main answer here is time. If you want to learn more about industry but aren't yet sure if it's right for you, the only way to find out is to give yourself time to learn more about it. This means using LinkedIn and reaching out to people who currently work in industry and asking about their role, speaking with professors or older pharmacy students who have experience in industry, or finding a company and setting up a shadowing experience or temporary internship. I would also highly recommend picking a P₄ rotation in industry. This will give you a chance to test out if you like working in industry. There is no better way to discover what career is right for you than to experience it yourself.

