Dear Doctor,

Good day. This questionnaire unveils the qualities that Saudi plastic surgery residency program directors put emphasis on. Targeting current and former directors, it would serve as guidance for the aspiring plastic surgeons.

Filling this form is deeply appreciated by the authors. Furthermore, it would grant us permission to use the data for research purposes. No identifiers will be included and data will be kept classified from any third party.

For further queries, please contact: Qutaiba.shah@gmail.com

Much obliged,

The authors

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- Name:
  (Short answer)
  - Gender:
  Male
  Female
  - Do you currently hold a position of plastic surgery program director?
  No, I am a former program director
  Yes
  - How many years have you been working as a program director?
  (Short answer)
  - Where do/ did you work as a program director?
  Central region
  Western region

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- On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means (Least important) and 7 means (Most important), please rank the following 7 items in the order of importance from your perspective. Please give each item a distinctive score. For example, give a score of 7 to the item (research experience) only and do not repeat the same score to other items, please.
  o How important is the grade point average (GPA)? Assuming the candidate passed the minimum requirement by your center. (1-7)
- How important is the Saudi Medical License Examination (SMLE) score? Assuming the candidate passed the minimum requirement by the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS). (1-7)
- How important is good impression in interview? (1-7)
- How important is prior experience in plastic surgery such as electives? (1-7)
- How important is the candidate’s experience in research? By experience we mean: Evidence of knowledge in research through courses in medical research and publications. (1-7)
- How important is attaining a post-graduate degree such as a master degree? (1-7)
- How important is presenting posters or oral presentations in events? (1-7)

- Which of the following regarding recommendations is more important?
  Number of recommendations
  Reputation of the recommending person
  Mode of recommendation, such as phone calls or written letters
  Quality of the language and content of the recommendation
  Recommendation from a program director

- Which of the following regarding previous background in plastic surgery is the most important?
  The candidate worked/ took an elective at our department
  The candidate worked/ took an elective abroad
  The candidate worked/ took an elective with a distinguished plastic surgeon

- Which of the following is the most important regarding research?
  Publishing in prestigious journals
  Quantity of publications (Regardless if they are in plastic surgery or not)
  Quality of publications (In terms of proper design, well execution, and writing quality)
  1 or 2 publications in plastic surgery regardless of other details such as quality of the journal and complexity of the design.

- Would you be more impressed by a candidate with research experience in basic sciences than in clinical fields?
  No
  Yes
- Is a candidate who passed international licensing examinations, such as the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), more likely to be accepted in your program?
  No
  Yes
  - Does a fresh graduate (Graduated within the last two years) have a higher chance of acceptance in your program than older candidates?
    No
    Yes
  - Is the gender of applicants important for acceptance in your program?
    No
    Yes
  - Does the reputation of the medical school where the applicant graduated from influence their chance of acceptance in your program?
    No
    Yes
  - Does reputation of the applicant (during a rotation or between staff) influence their chance of acceptance in your program?
    No
    Yes
  - Are awards or honors important when selecting an applicant?
    No
    Yes
  - Does knowledge in plastic surgery play a significant role in accepting a candidate?
    No
    Yes