

**Putting words into numbers: Assessing the
assessors using the Narrative Evaluation Quality
Instrument (NEQI)**

Dennis Beatty, MD

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Describe the elements of an effective narrative evaluation**
- 2. Review and understand the Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)**
- 3. Demonstrate use of the NEQI and discuss how to give feedback to assessors**

Narrative Evaluation

Narrative evaluations are assessments completed by supervising physicians used to evaluate learners.

In medical clerkships and acting internships, these evaluations form the basis of grades, and the narrative language from these evaluations is quoted in Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE) letters and letters of recommendation, which in turn are core components of residency applications.

Narrative Evaluation

Good vs Bad?

“best student ever”

“..pleasant to have in clinic”

“keep reading”

Effective vs insufficient

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Small Group Exercise I

Introductions

Assign scribe

*Discuss components of effective narrative
evaluations, document*

Report to whole group



Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Effective Narrative Evaluation

Performance Domains

- 1. Overall Performance**
- 2. Clinical Skills (history-taking, PE, procedural)**
- 3. Clinical Reasoning Skills**
- 4. Preparation and Participation**
- 5. Fund of Knowledge**
- 6. Written and/or Oral Skills**
- 7. Initiative**
- 8. Professionalism**

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

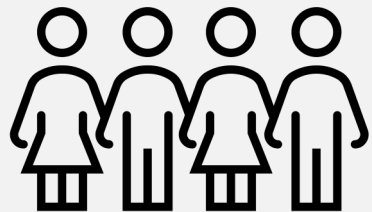
Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Narratives often differ based on race and gender

Men and White applicants described using competency-related behaviors

“Exceptional”
“Leaders”
“Quick learners”
“Intelligent”
“Comprehensive”
“Knowledgeable”



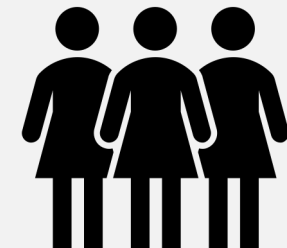
URM applicants described more frequently as...

“Competent”



Women applicants described using personal attributes

“Pleasant”
“Enthusiastic”
“Sensitive”
“Lovely”
“Empathetic”
“Compassionate”



Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Effective Narrative Evaluation

Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

1. Qualifiers: “exhibited *strong* clinical skills”; “*excellent* clinical judgement”
2. Evidence: “*took complete histories including pertinent negatives*”; “*was able to prioritize differential diagnoses*”
3. Specific Example: “she picked up on key exam findings, *including ataxia in a patient with cerebellar stroke*”

Good



Better



Best

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Three functions of narratives

Assess performance

- Principle source in assessing clinical competency
- Narrative evaluations perform as well as rating scales in differentiating student performance

Feedback to trainees

- Provide feedback and insight for trainees in strengths and weaknesses
- Trainees prefer narrative comments to numerical scales

UME -> GME hand-off

- Well-written comments are more informative than numerical rating scales

Medical School Perspective

MSPE only standard document in the residency application process

Difficult to train faculty to write narrative evaluations that fully and accurately represent student performance

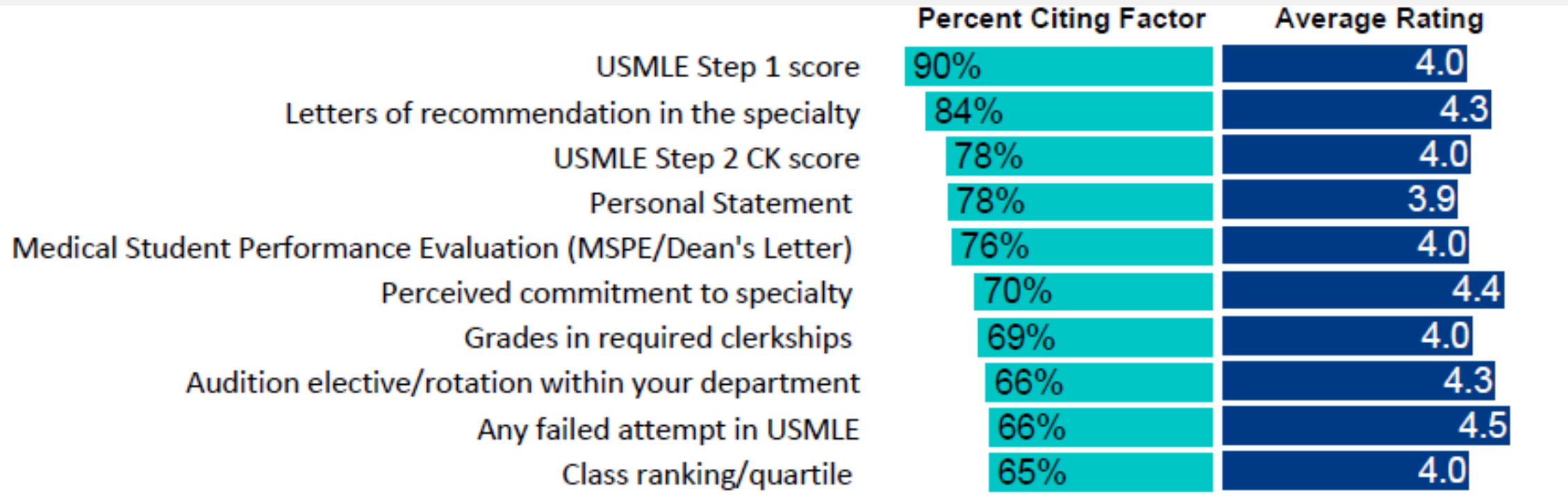
Schools/departments have variable levels of support for faculty development

Faculty/schools do not want to disadvantage students in the application process

Residency Perspective: What We Know

Results of the NRMP Program Director Survey Results, 2020¹

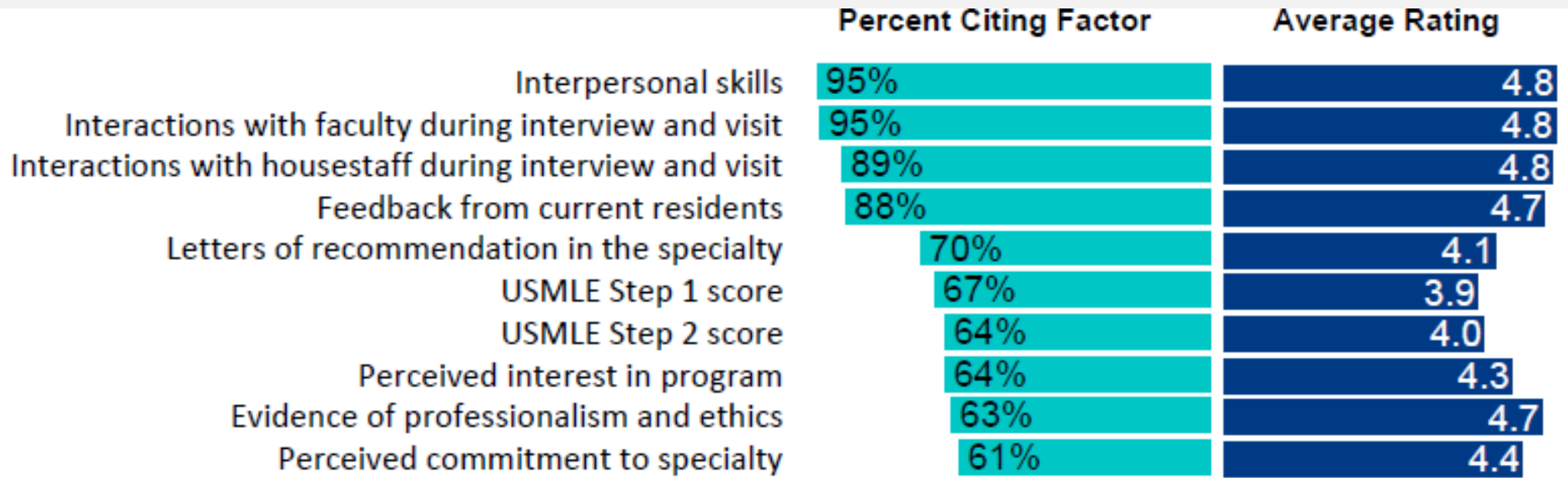
Top 10 factors cited by PDs when selecting applicants to interview
(N=650)



Residency Perspective: What We Know

Results of the NRMP Program Director Survey Results, 2020¹

Top 10 factors cited by PDs when selecting applicants to rank (N=641)



Residency Perspective: Quality Narratives Are Important

- 1. Record numbers of applications**
- 2. Need a reliable & efficient way to give each candidate consideration**
- 3. 76% of PDs use MSPE to screen for interviews (after Step 2 & specialty LORs)**
- 4. MSPE used to screen for “red flags”**
- 5. Programs want qualified candidates that are a good “fit”**
- 6. Difficult to make comparisons between schools using different grading system**
- 7. Skepticism with regards to information in the MSPE “what are they hiding from me?”**

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

Effective Narrative Evaluation

What are components of an effective narrative evaluation?

Comments on Performance, not Personality

Avoids Bias

Includes Qualifiers, Evidence, Specific Examples

Useful to trainee, to CD/MSPE, to Residency PDs

Includes both Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Uses Standardized Framework (ACGME Competencies, RIME, etc)

R - Reporter

I - Interpreter

M - Manager

E - Educator

R	Gather and present appropriate, pertinent information
I	Analyze and prioritize data, critical thinking, differential diagnosis
M	Discuss the most logical next steps
E	Self-directed learner, ability to educate others

P-Professionalism
R-Reporter
I- Interpreter
M-Manager
E-Educator
+ PLUS

P	Responsibility, attitude, response to feedback, motivation
R	Gather and present appropriate, pertinent information
I	Analyze and prioritize data, critical thinking, differential diagnosis
M	Discuss the most logical next steps
E	Self-directed learner, ability to educate others
+	What was done well and modified, what are areas for improvement?

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Education Research: The Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument

Development of a tool to assess the assessor

Michael S. Kelly, MD, Christopher J. Mooney, PhD, Justin F. Rosati, MD, Melanie K. Braun, MD, and
Robert Thompson Stone, MD

Neurology[®] 2020;94:91-95. doi:10.1212/WNL.00000000000008794

Correspondence

Dr. Stone
Robert_stone@
urmc.rochester.edu

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

3 Components:

Performance Domains

Specificity of Comments

Usefulness to Trainee

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

3 Components:

Scoring:

Performance Domains



0-4 pts

Specificity of Comments



0-4 pts

Usefulness to Trainee



0-4 pts

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

3 Components:

Scoring:

Performance Domains



0-4 pts

Specificity of Comments

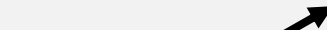
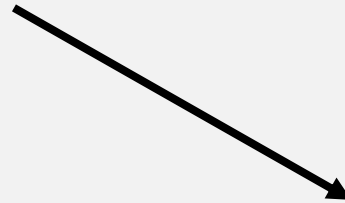


0-4 pts

Usefulness to Trainee



0-4 pts



0-12 pts total

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

3 Components:

Scoring:

Performance Domains



0-4 pts

Specificity of Comments



0-4 pts

Usefulness to Trainee



0-4 pts

0-12 pts total

A minimum NEQI score of 7 is suggested to be of a level at least moderate usefulness to the learner and grading committee

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Predictors of faculty narrative evaluation quality in medical school clerkships Mooney, C, et al. Med Educ. 2022;1–9

Student gender

Faculty gender

Faculty Department (Neurology vs Internal Medicine)

Clinical education experience (years)

Annual weeks on Teaching Service

Time with student (<2 vs >2 weeks)

Time to completion of Narrative Evaluation (<10 days vs >10 days)

p = 0.011 1.92 points higher NEQI score

p = 0.004

Mean NEQI Score = 6.65

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Performance Domains Commented On

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall performance • Clinical skills • Clinical reasoning skills • Prepares for and participates in patient care activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund of knowledge • Written and/or oral skills • Initiative • Professionalism (interpersonal skills with patients/staff) |
|---|---|

0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
No selected domains commented on	1-2 selected domains commented on	3-4 selected domains commented on	5-6 selected domains commented on	7-8 selected domains commented on

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Specificity of Comments: Qualifiers, Evidence, and Examples				
0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some qualifiers used • No supporting evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently uses qualifiers • 1-2 pieces of supporting evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently uses qualifiers and supporting evidence • No specific examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently uses qualifiers and supporting evidence • Provides one specific example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequently uses qualifiers and supporting evidence • Provides more than one specific example

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Usefulness to Trainee		
0 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Low usefulness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of third person without personal descriptors or names • Sentence fragments lacking verbs and capitalization • Minimal specific information given - often vague 	<p>Moderate usefulness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes trainee using terms found in grading rubric with minimal advice or specific information • Exhorts the trainee to continue current performance 	<p>High usefulness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives examples from trainee's rotation, and demonstrates knowledge of trainee • Helps trainee understand how to excel; reinforces good behaviors or gives constructive criticism for how to change

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)



Min



Bart



Bob



Elsa

Small Group Exercise II

Use the NEQI tool to calculate Performance Domains, Specificity of Comments, and Usefulness to Trainee scores.

Report to whole group

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)



Small Group Exercise III

Calculate a complete NEQI score for two Narrative Evaluations. Discuss what feedback one might give to the faculty author of the evaluations.

Report to whole group

Narrative Evaluation Quality Instrument (NEQI)

Thank You!!

