

## Graduating Plastic Surgery Residents and their Attending Mentors: Do We See Eye to Eye?

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### Purpose:

Neither the factors influencing senior residents as they search for employment nor the role of attendings as mentors in this process have been elicited. We aim to directly elucidate these measures through a survey of attending surgeons and senior residents.

### Methods:

Members of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, senior residents, and recent graduates were identified and sent a survey on the topic of employment experience in plastic surgery. Responses were analyzed with p-values of less than 0.05 deemed significant.

### Results:

Of 616 respondents, 43 (7.0%) were senior residents and 573 (93.0%) were attending surgeons. When compared, residents' desired practice profile was significantly different ( $p < 0.0001$ ) compared to attendings.

Senior residents and attendings ranked the factors that they will, or should, consider when graduating residency. Residents ranked location ( $p=0.0030$ ), exact case mix desired ( $p=0.0131$ ), and desire or lack of desire to teach residents ( $p=0.0329$ ) as more important than attendings felt they should be. They also ranked time frame of guaranteed salary ( $p=0.0178$ ) and incentive structure ( $p=0.0069$ ) as less important than attendings felt they should be.

When compared with senior attendings, attendings with less than 10 years of experience ranked location ( $p=0.0215$ ) and desire or lack of desire to teach residents ( $p=0.0497$ ) as significantly more important. They ranked time frame of guaranteed salary ( $p=0.0376$ ) and benefits ( $p=0.0008$ ) as significantly less important.

Senior residents and attendings then ranked the factors that they would, or did, consider when choosing to maintain or change a current employment. Compared to junior attendings, residents ranked location ( $p=0.0354$ ) as more important. Compared to senior attendings, residents ranked location ( $p=0.0004$ ) as more important and earning potential ( $p=0.0037$ ), benefits ( $p=0.0041$ ), and incentive structure ( $p=0.0265$ ) as less important. Compared to senior attendings, junior attendings ranked location ( $p=0.0130$ ) and desire to teach ( $p=0.0304$ ) as more important. All other rankings among groups did not differ significantly.

### Conclusions:

Residents and their attending mentors differ significantly in perceived importance of employment factors. Residents value location and desire to teach uniformly as more important than attendings, who more valued benefits and incentives. Residents' values corresponded more to the values of junior rather than senior attendings. To find a professionally and personally satisfying employment after graduation, senior residents should carefully seek mentorship with compatible advisors as many attendings may hold discordant values and opinions.

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## Figures:

Figure 1: Senior residents and attendings rank the factors that they will or should consider when graduating residency and seeking employment

	Residents	Attendings	p-Value
Guaranteed Salary	4.000	3.834	0.7317
Time Frame of Guaranteed Salary	6.486	5.324	<b>0.0178</b>
Opportunity for Practice Growth	5.081	4.402	0.0802
Exact Case Mix Desired	5.135	6.208	<b>0.0131</b>
Exact Payor Mix Desired	8.297	8.396	0.8018
Practice Personalities	4.378	4.659	0.5716
Lifestyle	5.514	5.579	0.8923
Earning Potential	6.432	6.017	0.4066
Benefits	9.432	8.644	0.0510
Incentive Structure	9.838	8.549	<b>0.0069</b>
Location	3.622	5.64	<b>0.0030</b>
Desire/Lack of desire to teach	9.784	10.747	<b>0.0329</b>

residents			
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Figure 2: Factors influencing the choice to maintain or change employment stratified by resident and attending experience

	Residents	p-Value (R vs J)	Junior Attendings (<10 years)	p-Value (R vs S)	Senior Attendings (>10 years)	p-Value (J vs S)
Practice personality	2.38	0.4428	2.647	0.7492	2.482	0.3548
Base salary	3.97	0.9387	4.00	0.4932	3.748	0.1806
Lifestyle	3.69	0.8099	3.773	0.7478	3.789	0.9281
Earning potential	4.49	0.0781	3.907	<b>0.0037</b>	3.663	0.1517
Benefits	6.13	0.1158	5.74	<b>0.0041</b>	5.499	0.0618
Incentive structure	6.33	0.1053	5.86	<b>0.0265</b>	5.710	0.3543
Location	2.72	<b>0.0354</b>	3.627	<b>0.0004</b>	4.236	<b>0.0130</b>
Desire to teach	6.28	0.6693	6.447	0.0760	6.874	<b>0.0304</b>

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