

How to use EPAs to take charge of your surgical training



EPAs present trainees with an opportunity to take control of their surgical training, to self-assess, to request assessments, and to obtain feedback from faculty.



If used effectively, EPAs can be the basis of the conversation that the trainee has with their faculty and lead to a closer educational bond and enhanced communication between them.



EPAs can help trainees pinpoint areas of relative strength and weakness in preparation for independent practice. Faculty feedback will give you insights into which clinical entities you need to work on and where you need to improve.



With the EPA model, trainees have a roadmap for each activity. The path to entrustment and autonomy is clearly defined. Working with an attending for the first time, they will be able to see what level of entrustment you have achieved thus far.



Take ownership of triggering requests for an assessment. There's a clear incentive to prompting faculty. The more assessments you prompt and the more data you gather, the faster you will approach entrustment and autonomy.



When making the case for more autonomy, be prepared to share with an attending the level of entrustment you've achieved in the past for the same activity or procedure.