

PREPARING FOR AN INTERVIEW FOR GRADUATE OR A PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

Overall helpful hints:

1. Know the basics

- What time is the interview? (Arrive 15min early)
- Where is the interview? Have you been there before? Do a drive run so you know how long it will take to get there from where you are staying.
- Do you have a contact number for someone in case of emergency or illness? (24-48 h notice, if possible)
- What do you know about the interview schedule? (panel? Lunch? All day?)
- No smoking, eating, or drinking coffee directly before the interview.
- Pack a toothbrush or toothpick in your purse just in case they take you out to eat.
- Tide pens are awesome. Consider having one with you.
- Carry a bit of cash in case you need to pay for parking or some other small thing while you are getting to the interview.

2. When preparing for your interview practice answers for potential questions

a. Make sure you have nicely polished (and avoid vocal fillers like umm) answers to questions like ...

- Tell me about yourself
- Tell me about your research
- Tell me about your internship
- Tell me about your extracurricular activities
- Why did you select this school or this program

b. Read through the list from previous students below and practice appropriate questions. I

- If you get a scenario questions - you can take a moment to answer if you need to, but don't use vocal fillers.

c. Google your programs name along with interview questions and see if others have listed potential questions.

d. Practice answering the questions out loud, but don't memorize answers.

e. Find out information about the job/school and the employer? (Can make a chart)

- Mission?
- Goals?
- Clientele?

3. Have a typed list of questions for them. Opinion questions are the best. Make sure you pay attention to their answers, even making notes when appropriate. Make sure the answers are not found on the website. For example:

- Your program's curriculum is different than _____, can you tell me about your advantages?
- Your program has _____, can you tell me more about it?
- I see _____% of your students get a job (residency, post-doc, etc) and can you tell me if they are happy in their new positions?
- How did you end up working for this school/company?
- What do you love about your job?
- What goals do you have for this upcoming year?
- I've done some research about this position and _____ (the company) but I'd really like to hear you describe the corporate culture here in your own words.
- What makes this a great place to work or go to school here? And since no company/school is perfect, what could be improved upon?

4. Dress –

- Be polished, hair nicely done, clothes pressed (you should be in a suit for professional and graduate schools), females a little bit of make-up (if you are not a make-up person, lip gloss and mascara will suffice.) Mascara can make someone look more awake.
- Personal hygiene - you nails need to be clean and cut but not noticeable, females a nice clear polish, eye brows, fresh haircut, etc. Males should be clean-shaven, unless you have a beard. If you have facial hair it should be nicely trimmed. This isn't the time to go for the scraggy facial hair.
- Females need to be modest, but feminine, i.e. skirt and suit jacket. If you have a colored suit it could help you stand out, most applicants will be in a black skirt, black suit jacket and colored shirt.
- Males need to wear a tie, suit jacket, and dress shoes.
- You will appear more professional if you carry your paperwork in a (simple, leather) folder, rather than carrying around a backpack.
- Do not wear ear pods or refer to your cell phone at any time during the interview.

After the Interview- Following Up!

Bring a thank you card with you to the interview that is already stamped and ready to go and leave it in your car. Write the note expressing your thanks and anything else that stood out to you about the opportunity or what was said. Find a mailbox on your way home and mail it. If it was a panel, you can send the card on to the person that lined up the interview for you or the lead interviewer. You can send a brief thank you e-mail to everyone else. Please do this within 24 hours of your interview.

4. Other Resources

- Don't forget to utilize the resources at the Career Services Center in the basement of the library (Jan Gray - room 016A.) They will help you with application letters, resumes, and dress. They also conduct & video a mock interviews for you.
- "The Medical School Interview: Winning Strategies From Admissions Faculty" Really saved my buns! Worth every penny...
- <http://www.studentdoctor.net/>

5. Real Interview Questions

Sample questions that previous students have been asked are listed below. Note that these questions are from many different types of programs (MD, DO, etc). If you have a question the interviewers asked you that is not on the list, please e-mail it to me so I can update the list.

1. Tell me about yourself - as it pertains to growth and what you've learned over your lifetime thus far?
2. Why do you want to go into _____(i.e. medicine)?
3. What was your most meaningful shadowing experience?
4. Why do I think I didn't get in last year?
5. 20 years from now I am driving along a Kansas road and see a car accident. As I arrive I have the knowledge that there are three injured people and I only have the capacity to save one. There is an elderly scientist with the cure for cancer, a single mother of three, and an infant, who do I save?
6. You are a transplant surgeon and you have two patients... Both are infants with heart defects and one has Downs Syndrome. You have just received word that you have one heart to give, who do you choose?
7. What is one of the major problems of our healthcare system today and how can we start to fix it?
8. I see that you've listed (so and so) as your influences in wanting to pursue a career as a physician. Could you talk a bit about that?
9. What job do you think has most significantly prepared you for a career in medicine?
10. What are your biggest weaknesses?
11. I see that you've listed _____experience as one that has helped to shape how you see yourself practicing medicine. Would you elaborate more on that?
12. What will you do if you don't get in this year?
13. Would you tell me a bit about your activities as an undergraduate?
14. Are you satisfied with how the U.S. healthcare system currently operates?
15. What were your biggest influences about choosing a career path as a physician?
16. How do you cope with failure?
17. How do you handle stress?
18. I see that you are very busy with schoolwork and extracurricular activities. What do you like to do in your free time?
19. Are you actively shadowing physicians?
20. You are an E.R. physician who is working the midnight shift and the waiting room is packed. A man enters and demands to have morphine due to his unbearable back pain. What do you do?
21. You are a physician in a small town. You are not on call, but since you live in a small town you "sort of are at the same time". You are about to leave to see your child play in his/her first soccer game and you are five minutes late. Your phone rings and a nurse tells you that one of your patients is about to undergo a non-life-threatening procedure, yet will not calm down. He/She insists the only person that can calm him/her down is you. What do you do?
22. Tell me about yourself.
23. Tell me about a time you faced an unexpected change in your life and tell me how you dealt with it.
24. Tell me about a time you had to make a difficult decision and what the outcome was.
25. Tell me about a time you had to come up with a creative solution to a problem.

26. Why do you want to be a DO physician?
27. Why do you want to attend _____ school?
28. Your family is comprised solely of MD physicians. Are they supportive of you wanting to become a DO physician?
29. You have shadowed both MDs and DOs. Can you compare the two experiences?
30. What else do you want to accomplish after you have become a physician and have settled down?
31. How many medical schools have you applied to?
32. You have extensive leadership experience from your undergraduate years. How do you see what you have learned from these jobs transitioning into your new job as a physician?
33. Most of your family is located in _____. How will you deal being isolated from your support network?
34. Why should we accept you against another student with the same qualifications?
35. What do you want the admissions committee to know about you that is not listed in your file?
36. Are you familiar with our program's mission? What activities have you done that align with our mission?
37. What do you think will be your greatest challenge in completing Medical school?
38. What can you bring to our incoming class?

Have your friends/family choose 5 of these words below that they think best describes you. Use these terms as you develop answers to potential questions about yourself.

Accountability	Excellence	Perfection Piety
Accuracy	Excitement	Positivity
Achievement	Expertise	Practicality
Adventurousnes	Exploration	Preparedness
Altruism	Expressiveness	Professionalism
Ambition	Fairness Faith	Prudence
Assertiveness	Family-	Quality-
Balance Being	Orientedness	orientation
the best	Fidelity Fitness	Reliability
Belonging	Fluency Focus	Resourcefulness
Boldness	Freedom Fun	Restraint
Calmness	Generosity	Results-oriented
Carefulness	Goodness Grace	Rigor Security
Challenge	Growth	Self-actualization
Cheerfulness	Happiness Hard	Self-control
Clear-	Work Health	Selflessness Self-
mindedness	Helping Society	reliance
Commitment	Holiness Honesty	Sensitivity
Community	Honor Humility	Serenity Service
Compassion	Independence	Shrewdness
Competitiveness	Ingenuity	Simplicity
Consistency		Soundness
Contentment		Speed
Continuous		Spontaneity
Improvement		Stability
Contribution		Strategic
Control		
Cooperation		
Correctness		
Courtesy		