



Preparing for Your Professional School Interview

1. Do your homework! Thoroughly digest the information on the Web site and in any printed materials and Web site reviews. You should know everything there is to know about the program before you visit.
2. Make a list of your questions about the program. Write them down! Ask them at the interview, showing your interest. Also make sure you have a list of the things about the program you like. In other words, be able to tell interviewers why you applied to that program.
3. Make a list of questions you have for current students. There are many things you want to know as a potential student and resident of the area! Current students are a great source of information about potential PhD mentors.
4. Make a list of people you will or may meet, *i.e.*, anyone on the admissions committee (do not forget clerical staff members.) This is especially important if you know the members of the interview committee.
5. For medical school: become familiar with some of the issues facing the medical profession, *e.g.*, health care plans, shortage of general practitioners, aging population, etc.
6. Be prepared to discuss your strengths! Give specific examples.
7. Be prepared to discuss things you are working to improve upon (*e.g.*, time management, speaking skills, etc.) and the specific things you are doing to address these issues. (You do not have weaknesses, but you do have things you want to improve.)
8. If faced with an ethical question, identify the two conflicting principles and, if pressed for an opinion, go with the one that is most important in your mind.
9. Re-read your application materials (all of them, including the AMCAS application) and prepare to discuss anything in them. These materials will be the source of introductions and questions in the initial stages of a 'closed' folder interview.

10. Practice your greeting in front of a mirror and with friends. Practice answering questions! There is no way to conduct a mock interview that will create the same stressful environment. Be sure you have some practiced greetings and opening remarks so you can get your mouth and brain working. Interviewers know you are nervous, but they want to be certain you can handle stressful situations.
11. Remember that successful interviews are more than question-answer sessions. They involve *conversations*. Do not ramble. There is nothing wrong with taking a moment to gather and organize your thoughts. Get your brain moving before your mouth moves.
12. Arrive the day before the scheduled interview. Take no chances with airline connections, etc. Dress appropriately. For professional schools it is full business professional! Men: suit and tie. Women: business suit and comfortable shoes. No cell phones or laptops.
13. Have fun! This is a chance to show off! Interviewers want to be certain you are right for the program and that you like the program and are considering attending.
14. Smile. Always smile...particularly if you are interviewing for dental school!

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