Pre-Health Interview Prep

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Interviewer’s Perspective

- **Time is scarce**
  - Show interviewer their time is valued

- **Students who will complete program**
  - Directives from state with funding
  - Accepting one means rejecting another

- **A good fit**
  - Match with school mission
  - Gets along with other applicants
  - Enthusiastic about program
Show Interviewer’s Time is Valued

- Dress
- Preparedness
  - Review and practice
- Planning
  - Arrive early and calm

Communicate in multiple ways that the interview is important to you!
What to Wear to Your Job Interview

**Interview Attire for Men:**
- Clean shaven face or neatly trimmed beard
- Two-piece suit
  - Cleaned and pressed
  - Conservative colors like navy and dark gray
- Long-sleeve shirt, even in summer
  - White or light blue solid color
- Empty pockets to eliminate bulges
- Conservative tie
- Belt matching color of shoes
- Leather shoes, black or cordovan
  - Polish right before
- No earrings
- Clean, trimmed fingernails

**Tips**
- Lay out your interview outfit the evening before and check for stains, tears or missing buttons.
- Make sure your interview clothing is clean and well pressed.
- Except for women’s earrings, avoid body-piercing jewelry.
- Avoid perfume, cologne, and aftershave.
- Men should be clean-shaven. A carefully trimmed beard or mustache is also acceptable. Avoid stubble that looks like a few days of growth.
- If possible, cover your tattoos.
- Wear clothes that fit.
- Do not wear flashy jewelry or watches.

**Interview Attire for Women:**
- Two-piece, matched suit
  - Skirt should cover thighs when seated
  - Navy, black, gray or dark brown
- Tailored blouse, shell or knit top
  - Do not show cleavage
  - Avoid gaping at chest
- Leather Shoes
  - No stilettos or platforms
- Carry only one bag or tote
- Avoid perfume
- Avoid heavy makeup
- Clean, trimmed fingernails

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You only get one chance to make a good first impression with a potential employer. The clothes you wear are the first part of that first impression, so dress to impress. A business suit says you mean business, even though it may make you feel overdressed and uncomfortable. It shows that you care about making a good first impression. Thousands of people are eliminated as job candidates every week merely because they were not dressed appropriately for the interview, but a business suit is always appropriate.
Dress for Success Checklist

✓ Quality suit – subtle colors
✓ Leather shoes
  ✓ Break in for comfort
  ✓ Polish
✓ Modest jewelry
✓ No added fragrance
✓ Only one tote/bag
  ✓ Portfolio with notepad
  ✓ Pen

Remove tacking from pleat in jacket and skirt back. Pockets also may be tacked.
Review Before Interview

▪ Personal Inventory
  ▪ Your characteristics, interests, experiences

▪ Application
  ▪ Questions come from application

▪ Program’s Website
  ▪ Why this school
  ▪ Topics for your questions
Personal Inventory

1. Why this career?
2. All your characteristics good for this profession
3. All experiences – note leadership
4. Connect experiences to 1
5. All your travels – domestic and international – connect to 1 & 2
6. Awards, scholarships
7. Challenging times/situations – lessons learned
8. Strengths and weaknesses
9. Top 3 problems in your field of healthcare according to you
10. Where you will be 5, 10, 20 years from now
11. Personal and professional goals
12. Free-time activities – hobbies and sports

Source: The Medical School Interview
Overarching Issues of Admission Committee

- Your experience in this field
  - Shadowing, working
- Make it to and in this profession
  - Academics, self-care, expectations
- Awareness of healthcare issues
  - Your ideas and opinions are realistic
- Do you “fit” in our program
  - Mission and cohort

Most questions fit within these areas. Your personal inventory will address most questions.

Source: The Medical School Interview
Your Answer: Rule of 3

- Well-rounded
  - Just the right amount of information
- Easy to recall
  - A pattern in short-term memory
- Builds confidence

Recall three aspects when responding to most questions.
Rule of 3 with a Brief Back-up

- Examples of back-up:
  - Where you practiced this characteristic
  - An example of the characteristic in practice
  - Why this characteristic is important to you

Don’t just list three aspects: Use each as place holders for the details
STAR Method

- **Situation**
  - Set the scene
- **Task**
  - Your role/responsibility
- **Action**
  - Steps you took to address it
- **Results**
  - The outcome of your action

“Tell me about...” Challenge Conflict Success Failure (include lesson learned)
Answers to Prepare in Advance

- Tell me about yourself (Ro3)
- Why this career (Ro3)
- What would you do if you can’t do this career (why Ro3)
- Why this school (Ro3)
- Strengths and weaknesses (2S, 1W)
- A challenge you overcame (STAR)
- A time of conflict (STAR)
- Something you are proud of (STAR)
- A failure (STAR)
- Top issues in your field (Ro3)

Ro3: Rule of 3 – three aspects with details

STAR: Situation, Task, Action, Result (lesson from failure)
Answering Ethical Questions

- No firm right/wrong answer – OK to take a stance and say why
- Looking for your thought process - say what you are thinking
- Don’t make assumptions – identify unknowns
- Use empathy – address the perspective of each involved
  - “I believe X, but I can see the struggle this person has…”
Prepare Questions in Advance

- Specific to their program
  - Not answered on their site
- Evaluate student support
- Follow up on topics addressed earlier
- Write questions on your notepad
  - OK to take notes
Preparation for In-Person Interview

- Dress for success checklist (Slide 5)
- Plan to arrive early and calm
- Rest and nourishment
Preparing for Virtual Interview

- Check equipment – webcam, connection
- Environment – avoid cluttered background, moving fans
- Raise screen – avoid looking down
- Set up workstation – take notes on paper, show ID
- Wear your suit
- Arrive early

You may reserve an interview room at the Career Center
During the Virtual Interview

- Maintain good posture and eye contact
- Turn off cell phone
- Avoid distractions from pets and roommates
- Don’t type notes
- Make sure others are not using bandwidth
- Take your turn in group interviews
Mock Interview

Mock interview is a great way to prepare! The PPAO will conduct the mock MMIs, and the Career Center will conduct the mock interviews. If you have been invited to interview with a program that conducts MMIs, you can register for a mock MMI here. If you would like a mock interview, you can register here.
Thank You Email After the Interview

- Send a thank you email
  - Within 24 hours of interview
  - Personalized for each interviewer, if possible
  - General admissions email

- Greeting (ex: Hello Dr. Jones,), Closing (ex: Best Regards,), Your first and last name (under closing)

- Message Outline (about 100 words):
  - Say thank you for the interview
  - Tell them you are excited about the opportunity to attend
  - Tell why the school appeals to you
  - If personalized, mention a connection at interview
Final Tips

▪ Show genuineness, authenticity, and enthusiasm
▪ Showcase your unique abilities, accomplishments, experiences and ideas
▪ Stay positive – sometimes they are testing your patience
▪ Care for the interviewer – they are your advocate
▪ If you are not having fun, they are not having fun
You GOT THIS!

- You were INVITED for an interview!
  - Your application got their interest
- You are WORTHY to be in professional school!
  - You will work hard to achieve your dream
- Relax and ENJOY the interview!
  - Be yourself - see if you “fit” at the school and in the cohort
- It is OK to be nervous!
  - Because you CARE!
- You are PREPARED!
Resources for this Presentation

- The UGA Career Center
- “50 Common Medical School Interview Questions
  - The Princeton Review
- “Medical School Applicant Interview Preparation Guide”
  - AAMC
- The Medical School Interview
  - Jeremiah Fleenor, MD, MBA
  - ISBN-10: 097795594X
- Virtual Dental School Interviews Do’s and Don’ts
  - ADEA-AADSAS
- The Core Competencies for Entering Medical Students
  - AAMC
Questions?

Pre-Professional Advising Office
Website: ppao.uga.edu

To make an appointment with Pre-Health Advisor, please visit our website.