



HDFCCC Office of
Education and
Training

Healthcare
Professional School
Interview Tip Sheet

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INTERVIEW TIP SHEET

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

HOW TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW

Timing: Schools tend to batch invitations so you should respond promptly in order to secure the best time slot for your schedule.

- If you'll be away from your email for an extended period of time, please ask a trusted colleague, friend or family member to manage your email inbox (coordinating with you and/or scheduling the interview on your behalf)
- If possible, take an extra day to explore the area, it could be the place you spend the next 4+ years.

What to consider when choosing an interview date and time:

- Holidays (flights may be more expensive)/breaks
- Transportation (e.g. driving, airplane, train)
- Season (e.g. winter – will it be snowing?)
- Time zone difference
- Other schools to which you've applied
 - If you are interviewing at another school in the same geographic area (e.g. east coast), call or email the admissions office to ask if they can accommodate your schedule
 - Can save you time and money!



What to Wear for an Interview

Solid neutral colors are preferable:

- Navy
- Gray
- Black

Attire: It is worth investing in a suit (you can use again when interviewing for future jobs/residency programs)

- Men:
 - Suits
- Women (check the weather!):
 - Pantsuits
 - Slightly above knee or knee length skirt

Comfortable shoes: The school liaison will bring interviewees on a campus tour. Ensure your shoes have a good grip in case the ground is wet from rain/snow:

- Men:
 - Leather lace-up or slip-on dress shoes in black or brown
- Women:
 - Leather or fabric lace-up or slip-on dress shoes (e.g. flats, low-heel pumps)
 - Avoid open-toed shoes and extremely high heels

When shopping for your interview suit, ask the store if they give discounts for medical school interview clothing. Some will give around 10% off.



Credit Cards with Mileage and Sign-Up Bonus

If you will be flying a lot, it might be a good idea to research credit cards with mileage and sign-up bonus. This may help cover a cost of a flight!

- Please read the sign up bonus carefully!



Lodging

- Find accommodation close to the campus (E.g. Hotel, Airbnb)
 - Ideal for situations in which walking is your only option
- Reach out to friends and family who live in the area to see if you can stay with them.
- Student Housing Programs
 - Current students may host applicants for a night free of charge. Take advantage of this opportunity as the current students can give you advice for the interview
- Ideal to have your own room so you can have a good night sleep before your interview!



Preparing for the Interview

Research about the interview(s):

- Will you have a one-on-one interview or group panel? Will it be a Multiple Mini Interview (MMI) setting (see below for more information on MMI)?
- Will it be a closed file or open file interview?

Practicing for the Interview

- Read your personal statement and additional application materials that were submitted
 - Make sure you know what you put in your application!
- Research common interview questions
- Practice interview questions alone and in front of a mirror. Then practice with your family/friends. Get feedback!
- Rehearse your “tell me about yourself” answer, but keep it extemporaneous. Try to touch on things about yourself that will ensure you are remembered.
- Think about how to briefly summarize how your interest in medicine developed



Other important interview tips:

- If possible, do a mock interview with someone who has been an interviewer before and for the same amount of time as the real interview (practicing endurance).
- In the week before the interview, read current healthcare-related news articles.
- Be aware of problems facing our healthcare system.

Research about the school

- Know the school’s mission, values, curriculum, and goals.
- Think about why you are applying for each school and why its curriculum/style fits you as a learner.
- Think about your interests and personal/professional goals
- Are there features of the school and/or its curriculum that align with your specific interests and goals?
 - If so, these can be talking points!



Day of the Interview

- If possible, find the meeting location the day before your interview
- Arrive to your interview 30 minutes early
- Remember to act courteously and professionally at all times
 - Around all faculty, trainees and administrative staff
 - During tours, group meetings/orientation, interviews
- Greet everyone politely
 - Including other applicants
- Turn off your phone and put it away
 - Wear a watch
- Be humble and modest but confident
- Ask if you're allowed to send thank you emails or cards to your interviewers
- Take a 3 deep breaths before entering the interview room
- When mentioning your experience at UCSF, make sure to specify you've worked at the "University of California San Francisco" instead of "UCSF". UCSF is a prestigious institution – but can sometimes be confused with other institutions when acronyms are used.



What to Bring to the Interview

A minimalistic briefcase/bag that can hold:

- Notepad and pen
- Multiple copies of your resume / CV
- Abstracts, articles, etc. that you published
- Questions to ask the interviewer
- Kleenex
- Advil
- Snack bar

The school will be passing out informational sheets as well.

Fee Assistance

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) has a fee assistance program for the items listed below. Although these are not directly related to interviewing, the money you save can be spent later on interview costs.

- MCAT Official Prep Products
- MCAT Registration Fee
- Medical School Admissions Requirements (MSAR) website fee
- AMCAS fees



MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEWS

The MMI is an interview format that consists of a series of 6 - 10 interview stations, each focused on a different question or scenario.

Why is it used?

- Limits interview biases due to the number of interactions
- Opinions of any single interviewer are not over-emphasized
- Allow applicants multiple opportunities to showcase their skills
- Students are given the topic and time to prepare
- Students have the opportunity to make multiple first-time impressions
- Allows students an opportunity to demonstrate a more well-rounded self

Format and Length

- Conducted over nearly two hours
- Each mini interview includes a 2 minute prep period followed by a 5- 8 minute conversation

Ways to Prepare

- Research types of MMI scenarios online
- Practice expressing yourself articulately and logically in a timed environment
- There often is not one right answer, instead practice explaining your thinking or what you see on both sides of an issue

Topics

- Designed to assess verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- Topics wide-ranging and individualized toward each medical school's goals. Some may assess critical thinking skills or current events, or prefer role playing type of questions
- All schools are looking for a strong cultural fit so research the school before you go

Interview Stations

- Scenarios involving interactions with an actor or a medical school's standardized patient
- An essay writing station (may take longer than the others)
- Standard interview station
- Teamwork station where candidates must work together to complete a task
- Ethical scenario involving questions about social and policy implications
- A "rest" station to help students catch their breath and relax