Interviewing 101

Preparing for Health Professions Schools Interviews

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Pathway For Tonight’s Discussion

- Importance of the Interview
- Preparation Before the Interview
- Interview Formats and Preparation Tips
- Interviewing Basics
- The Day of the Interview
- Interview Follow-up
- Questions?
Importance of the Interview for ALL types of schools:

- Critical factor in the admissions process, regardless of format

- Success in health professions school requires more than academic competence

- Interviews allow for assessing noncognitive skills and attributes, e.g. professionalism, interpersonal skills, motivation, altruism, maturity, compassion, enthusiasm, etc. and fit with the school
Interviews are not solely an opportunity for you to be evaluated by admissions:

*Interviews also allow YOU the opportunity to learn about the school and its programs, values, resources and goals*
Preparation Before the Interview

- Clothing and appearance: conservative, neat, well-groomed

Interview Suits

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6.
• Logistics, e.g. travel arrangements, lodging, Duke class absences, etc.

• Research the school: printed materials you receive, MSAR, school’s website, Duke alums attending the school

• Research school’s interview format and logistics: MSAR, school’s website, Duke alums attending the school
• PRACTICE AND PREPARE:
  o Review both your primary and secondary applications for the school
  o Review lists of typical questions
  o PRACTICE OUT LOUD and RECORD
  o Prepare questions for your interviewer
  o Why are you a good fit for this school?
  o Mock interviews
Interview Formats—Traditional

- One-on-one
- Panel (two or more interviewers)
- Group (multiple interviewers, multiple candidates)
- MD-PhD
- Open file
- Closed file
Traditional Interview Prep Tips

- Sample Qs to practice: behavioral, ethical, about your classes, current issues of professions, etc.; many lists of “typical questions” available—HPA website, online, etc. WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE [professional]?

- Note Qs specific to your program/profession, e.g. MD-PhD, veterinary medicine, DO, etc.

- Prepare Qs for schools: demonstrate your interest and preparation

- Let the interviewer lead; pay attention to cues
Interview Formats—MMI

- Structure: 2 minutes with scenario and 6 to 8 minutes with interviewer; in 6 to 12 stations
- You may or may not be allowed to take notes while reviewing the scenarios; assume not
- Knock before entering interview room
- Your interviewer may or may not offer hand for handshake, may or may not speak
- Provide brief summary of scenario before beginning to address scenario
MMI Interview Prep Tips

• Categories of scenarios:
  o Ethical issues
  o Role playing
  o Collaboration
  o Cultural competence
  o Social issues/health policy
  o Traditional interview
  o Rest
MMI Interview Prep Tips, cont.

- Practice with sample scenarios:
  - Identify and acknowledge main issue or problem
  - What is main source of issue or problem
  - Identify ways to resolve issue or problem
  - Create mental framework to keep your verbal response on track
  - Timing: with scenario, giving response
• What is being evaluated in MMIs:
  o Motivation for career in your chosen profession
  o Professionalism + Integrity
  o Various other competencies, e.g. cultural competence, altruism, maturity, empathy, compassion
  o *Not* specific protocols, clinical knowledge, etc.
How will you communicate during your interview?

- First impressions: smile, handshake, attire
- Verbal messages: speed, tone, volume,
- Non-verbal messages: posture, gestures, eye contact
- Active and engaged responses
- Situation Task Action Result
- Managing nerves and stress: prep, mindfulness
On Interview Day

• Arrive early
• Be pleasant to EVERYONE you encounter
• Demonstrate flexibility
• Engage with fellow applicants
• Take a deep breath and relax
• Do not sweat the small stuff!
In Case of Emergency…

- Be sure to have phone numbers for admissions office with you, not just email address
- If you are sick, reschedule—it is okay to do so
After the Interview

- Write thank you notes to your interviewers and send via email, snail mail; check preferences of school
- Write down your thoughts, impressions, reflections of your experiences for future reference
- Be aware when final decisions are likely to be made and follow up appropriately as needed
Support Available to You

- Office of Health Professions Advising
- HPA Website www.prehealth.duke.edu [Apply > Preparing for Your Interviews]
- AdviseStream Advising Resource Library [Connect > Library > Shared with Me > Interviewing at Health Professions Schools]
Support Available to You, cont.

- Duke alumni connections
  - Duke Med MAP
  - Duke Alumni Network
  - Linked In
References

• *Multiple Mini Interview for the Mind*, Kevyn To

• *The Medical School Interview*, Desai & Katta

• Multiple resources available in Advising Resource Library, HPA website
Questions?