Interviewing Skills

Presented by:
Med Ed Program of South Texas
Why am I being interviewed?

- Confirm what you have put on paper
- Showcase your personality
- Share your personality
- Demonstrate composure and maturity
- Complete the “paper picture”
Remember!

- Your interviewer is NOT looking for reasons to deny you
- Your interviewer is looking to “seal the deal”
Interview Steps

1. Preparation

2. “The Interview”

3. Follow up
Preparation is Key!

- Interviewing poorly does not disqualify you completely

- Interviewing poorly can hurt your chances of being considered

- Big time competition!
  - Preparation maximizes your chances of a successful interview!
Be familiar with...

- History
- Mission Statement
- Requirements
- Logistics
- Deadlines
Know Your Audience!

- Scholarship: usually someone on the committee, a business or community leader

- Job: usually the owner, manager, personnel director, or future colleague

- Med School / Programs: faculty, medical students, physicians from the community
Interview Location

- Physical Address
- Land marks that can help you find it
- Office phone number
- Office suite number
- Name of person to ask for upon arrival/contact person

*Have this info with you on the day of your interview*
Dress Code

- Dress conservatively

- This is not the time to make a fashion statement

- Avoid overpowering colors
  - stick with neutral colors such as black, tan (beige) or navy blue.
  - That being said –
    - figure out what your “power color” is
Males

- Wear a dark suit if you have one
  - a sports coat and tie work, too

- Do not wear jewelry unless it is a watch and/or a ring

- Your hair should be conservative
  - If you have long hair, make sure it is neatly combed and away from your face/eyes
Females

- Keep it simple: knee length skirt and blouse or pant is appropriate

- Do not wear skin tight or mid-drift clothing

- Wear natural make-up and toned-down jewelry
  - Wearing big necklaces, earrings, excessive rings and earrings is strongly discouraged.
Everyone

- You want the interviewer to pay attention to you for your skills, personality and academic record, **not your clothes!**

- If you are unsure about whether an outfit is appropriate, ask your advisor or someone you trust.
What is evaluated in an interview?

- Intellectual Curiosity
- Communication Skills
- Personality
- Motivation
- Extracurricular Interests
- Your suitability to their program / school
- Maturity
- Social Awareness & Cultural Competency
Self Evaluation

- Take a good look at your strengths, weaknesses and opinions before your interview
- Know yourself
- Review your application and personal essay
- Be ready to explain any deficiencies on your academic record
- Prepare a well planned and logical, yet sincere, explanation *without* excuses
- Realize your accomplishments
  - describe them demonstrating how they relate to what you are applying for
Do NOT Lie

- Ex: you indicate on your application you have conducted research, you better have the knowledge to back up your statement

- You may be asked detailed questions regarding your research, protocol

- You do not need to lie or stretch the truth in order to make a good impression

- Be honest, but diplomatic

- Let the interviewer see your uniqueness

- Someone who has reasonable and interesting aspirations
EYE CONTACT!

- Always make eye contact with your interviewer!
The Dreaded Question...

- What do you consider to be your weaknesses?
Focus on “Strong Weaknesses”

- Everybody has weaknesses
- Along with a minor weakness or two, try to point out a couple of weaknesses that the interviewer might see as strengths
- What might these be???
Your questions...

- As soon as the interviewer has concluded with the interview questions, be prepared to ask a few yourself.
  - Why did you chose this school?
  - Why should I chose this school?
  - Who will I be working with?
  - Are their opportunities for advancement?
Your questions, contd.

- Are their research opportunities within your school?
- Is training available?
- Always ask for clarification if you did not hear or understand a question completely.
A few more tips...

- Always be considerate of other’s time.
- Arrive with enough time to find your way around the city/campus.
- NEVER be late for an interview.
  - Do not be upset or angry if the interviewer is late, remember...he/she *does not* owe you an explanation.
- A college admission committee might let you interview with an alumni in your community.
- If something delays you, call ahead and ask if you should reschedule or come ahead as planned.
- Always thank your interviewer(s)
Telephone Interview

- Designate a quiet room to have your interview
- Make sure you are NOT on your cell phone
- Stand up or sit up straight
- Keep a smile on your face while talking to the other person
Follow Up

- At the closing of your interview, thank the interviewer for their time.

- Immediately after the interview, take some time to write them a “Thank You” card.

- A week after your interview, if you haven’t heard anything; you may call the person/people who interviewed you.
Questions??

- If you are preparing for an interview...
  - Contact the Med Ed office
  - Set up a “mock interview”

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