

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND PRELAW CENTER

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SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

With thanks to *Health Pathways* and *The Scalpel*

The following list came from applicants who interviewed with various medical schools. The questions are those most commonly asked during the applicants' admission interviews. Although committee members may not ask these exact questions during your interview(s), if you review and practice responses to them, you will be, and feel, more prepared and confident for the actual interview.

1.	Why do you want to be a doctor?	22.	What would you like to do if you are not accepted into medical school?
2.	What do you do in your spare time?	23.	Should doctors be required to serve two years in public service?
3.	What are your specific goals in medicine?	24.	What are your positive qualities and what are your negative qualities?
4.	What stimulated your interest in medicine?	25.	What is your relationship with your family?
5.	What do you think about the socialization of medicine?	26.	Do you have any plans for marriage in the future?
6.	What are your opinions about abortion?	27.	How do you think you fit into the medical profession as a person?
7.	What schools have you applied to and why?	28.	How do you think your role as a physician fits in with your role as a member of the community?
8.	What do you intend to gain from your medical education?	29.	As a woman, what kind of problems do you expect to encounter with regard to marriage, family, and so on? How do you expect to deal with these problems?
9.	What do you think about euthanasia?	30.	As a woman, how do you expect to reconcile the role of doctor with those of wife and mother; or do you not want to get married? Do you want children, etc.?
10.	Why do you think so many people want to be physicians?	31.	Describe your personality.
11.	Do you think minorities should be given special admission consideration?	32.	Of what value can you be to your school?
12.	How do you plan to finance your medical education?	33.	What are the best and worst things that have ever happened to you?
13.	Would you tell your patient she has eight months to live, etc.?	34.	What will you be doing in medicine 10 years from now?
14.	Pretend you are me, and I am you: What would you look for in an applicant?	35.	Is medicine a rewarding experience? Why?
15.	There are 1,000 applicants as qualified as you. Why should we choose you?	36.	Would you practice in the ghetto or the barrio? What do you think happens to persons who practice medicine in these environments (attitude changes, etc.)?
16.	Why do doctors have one of the highest suicide rates among professionals?	37.	If there was an accident on the freeway, and knowing about the present malpractice claims, would you stop and help the victims?
17.	What steps have you taken to acquaint yourself with what a physician does?	38.	What would you do to solve the current misdistribution of doctors in the U.S.?
18.	How would your plans differ if we were now under socialized medicine?	39.	What aspects of your life experiences do you think makes you a good candidate for medical school?
19.	How much money do you expect to earn as a physician?	40.	If your best friends were asked to describe you, what would they say?
20.	Who would you like to see as President of the U.S. and why?	41.	Can you think of a situation or patient population that might be challenging to work with? If so, how might you handle this challenge?
21.	What do you think the most pressing issue in medicine is today?		

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWING AT GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS OR PROGRAMS

The interview is an opportunity for you to re-emphasize with enthusiasm and personality your strengths as reflected in your written application. The following are some guidelines to capitalize on this long awaited opportunity to interview. Keep in mind that the interview is a two-way process. an opportunity for the interviewer to make an assessment of your qualifications and for you to become more knowledgeable about the school or program.

A. BASICS OF INTERVIEWING

- Be certain of the date, time, and **exact** place (including directions) of the interview. Confirm in writing with **every** school concerned. Ask the school to recommend hotels and transportation since student rates may be offered. Also, the school may have a list of students who are willing to provide overnight housing to interviewing applicants.
- Arrive at least 10-15 minutes early for the interview.
- Carry a pen and notepad. You will be prepared to make note of important references and other details.
- Listen carefully for the interviewer's name. Address the interviewer by name on occasion but not by first name – student interviewers excepted.
- Wait for the interviewer to offer to shake hands.
- Don't smoke, or chew gum.
- Wait until the interviewer sits or invites you to sit, before you do.

B. BASIC PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW.

- Research the school(s) using catalogues, curricula, directory interview reports, tapes, visits (where possible), conversations with faculty, school alumni, students, and others.
- Think through your responses to questions according to the type of interview: direct question/answer; indirect (*Tell me about yourself.*); and group or board/committee (several interviews and interviewees).
- Think of questions you want to ask. Your questions will reflect your personality, curiosity, and thought processes.
- Assess what you have to offer and be prepared to express that.
- Determine what you want from your education.
- Research pertinent current issues in the field or program for which you are interviewing.

C. THE INTERVIEW

- You are a salesperson; you have to communicate your motivation, experience, and skills in your statement and supplemental application. Reinforce this information during you interview, and project your personality during the interview.
- Be sincere, courteous, tactful, and use enthusiasm.
- Keep the interviewer's attention: Vary the tone of your voice, lower and raise your voice, vary the tempo—Speed up or slow down but always be articulate.
- Control the content of the interview. Interviewers will ask specific questions. Your responses should directly address the questions and can make reference to an area or subject that you want to talk more about.
- Display interest in the interview. Treat every question as important.
- Listen carefully to the questions or comments. When they are vague, ask for clarification: Did I understand your question to be...? As I understand the question...*
- Use the pause-to-think method when you need to regroup or organize thoughts.
- Avoid negative comments about fellow students, former employees, co-workers, and professors of classes in which your grades are lower.
- Be prepared to respond to questions about your weaknesses as well as your strengths.
- Respond tactfully to questions about your personal life, whether or not you understand their relevance to your motivation, qualifications or goals.
- Be yourself, and do not attempt to second-guess what the interviewer would like to hear; sometimes the answer may already be known.

- Do not be intimidated by your competition. **Think positively.**
- Be prepared for a sophisticated, professional interview technique. If he or she is an experienced interviewer, you will be prepared. If not, you have the advantage.
- Be honest and consistent in responses.
- Distinguish between questions that call for fact vs. opinion.
- Be confident. **Believe in YOU.**

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