

How to make the most of a College Interview

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- The interview is primarily for you to learn about the college and to allow the interviewer to learn about you. Use it as a tool to assist your college selection. The interview can have a positive effect on your admission—rarely a negative one.
- When you schedule an interview, check to see if it is evaluative (used as a factor in admissions decisions) or informational (used in helping an applicant learn more about the college). Knowing the purpose will help you prepare for the interview. In most cases, even if the interview is evaluative, it is not one of the most important criteria used by the college. Relax and be yourself!
- Your interview will usually be with an admissions staff member, but it maybe with a student, alumnus, or a professional interviewer. Keep this person's perspective in mind. Don't write off the college just because you think you had a bad interview. Interviewers have bad days, too.
- The interviewer is eager to get to know you and is almost always on your side. An experienced person knows that you may be new at interviewing and will try to put you at ease. The interviewer will answer your questions but will be more interested if you have helpful questions that show you've done some research on the college already.
- An important part of preparation is **self-assessment**. In what kind of environment do you work best? Would you take advantage of class discussions or would you rather learn by the lecture method? Know your rank, your test scores, and your present areas of interest. If you are undecided about your career, feel free to say so (half of college students change their intended major). You should, however, recognize that you are going to college primarily to learn. Think through some areas you would like to explore, competencies you would like to develop, projects or situations that intrigue you.
- Don't go unprepared. Do your homework about the school to get the obvious questions answered. You don't want to be silent when asked, "What would you like to know about our college?" Questions or comments like, "What if I can't decide between two majors?" "What kinds of internships are there, and how often do students take them?" or "I've liked art, but don't wish to major in it" show more maturity in your thinking than asking about the number of books in the college library.
- Interviewers may ask questions about your interests, extracurricular activities/jobs, books you've read, meaningful experiences, reasons for applying to this college, life at school, and similar topics. Be ready to talk about these subjects.
- Be honest. Everyone has strong and weak points. College will help you with some of the latter and promote the former.
- Plan to have your interview alone. Most admissions officers prefer to speak with your parents after talking with you, rather than during the interview.
- Dress neatly and comfortably.
- When you return home, write a thank-you note to the person who interviewed you.

**** If you would like some additional assistance, we can offer you a DVD on "HOW TO ACE THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW"***

Source: College Counseling Sourcebook, 4th Edition