



Interview FAQ

01.) Would you have an example of the kind of **email** message to send the interviewer?

Make it very short. Send it in Portuguese, with the essential message in **three** paragraphs.

Paragraph 1	SUBJECT	Agent (who: you)	Express your joy to have been invited.
Paragraph 2	VERB	Action (what you want)	Restate your enthusiasm and inform something new (if there is). Ask about instructions (send him/her a resume?)
Paragraph 3	COMPLEMENT	Result (reader reacts)	Suggest that he choose place/date; anticipate restriction (if there is any). Say thanks for his time and effort.

02.) Which Schools would you say if the candidate is called to do an interview it is a good predictor?

Schools such as Kellogg send interview invitations to all applicants, so being invited doesn't mean much; Wharton tends to invite many candidates, and obviously at the end it denies a lot of interviewees; but for HBS/Stanford, if you have an interview offer, it really indicates that your chances to get a letter of acceptance are fairly good.

03.) Any different orientation to an "Interview on Campus"?

See again: [Km 7.5 \(PIT STOP\) - Visiting](#)

Some schools offer applicants the chance to interview on campus. It can be with an AdCom member or even a second-year student. For some B-Schools, the interview is a preliminary screening tool. For others, it's used to help determine the intangible "personal fit". Many schools use the interview to elucidate issues within your candidacy or even evaluate borderline files. It is hard to predict the kind of interview you'll face. Just prepare yourself for all scenarios.

Important steps to follow:

i.) Try to maximize your visit.

Even before you take your flight to your destination - do your homework in Brazil.

Try to get a "Brazilian Welcome Committee". Access the School's site I try to get in touch with Brazilian students that share your interests (if the email contacts are not provided on the site, send an email to, e.g. the Private Equity Club asking for Brazilian members). You will be surprised to know how receptive they are). If you do your homework, you may even save hotel money: a friendly Brazilian may host you.



Attend an On-Campus Information Session. There are different ways MBA Programs market themselves to prospects candidates. But usually these events are standardized:

1. Welcome by an Admission Committee (AdCom) member;
2. An overview of the MBA Program;
3. A case study discussion/mock class, or simply a regular class;
4. Q&A session;
5. A campus tour;
6. A cocktail where you can mingle with current MBA participants/MBA staff.

ii.) Be prepared for questions about the interviewer's specific area of interest.
Confirm exactly who you will be speaking with.

iii.) Get there early.

Try to arrive much before your interview to talk to Brazilian current students. It's easy to engage in an insightful conversation about their MBA experience. Plan to tour the town before the interview to get a feel for housing, recreation, and living costs - you will want to show your knowledge of the city where you plan to spend the next two years. Being on campus also allows for a conversational flow about the facilities, learning environment, or program details.

iv.) Send your résumé

Before the interview, send a copy of your résumé to your interviewer. Bring along another copy.

v.) Business attire

Arrive at the interview on time (Brazilian: "arrive 5' BEFORE the schedule time") and properly dressed. The ONLY acceptable attire is a formal suit in a conservative color. Conservative is best - it's always better to err on the side of too dressed up than too casual.

vi.) Be succinct

Unlike an "Alumni Interview" that usually extends for more than an hour, "On Campus Interview" usually is done "by the book" (30'). Be prepared to answer the questions in a "straight to the point" format. Be concise and insightful, never shallow. And, obviously, remember to be yourself - don't concentrate on giving scripted answers.

vii.) Be insightful

Bring a few relevant questions to ask.

05.) Which Schools put more weight on the Interview?

HBS, Stanford, and Tuck place more emphasis to interview than other top MBA Programs.

06.) Do you know the criteria that Schools' AdCom use to select between alumni interview and phone interview?

A few MBA Programs work under a relevant restraint: alumni availability. And it is not related to candidate chances.



07.) I will travel next week and I'm afraid that I may be called to interview during this period...

Explain your problem to the interviewer and politely ask him/her to try to fit your schedule. More than 10 days on the trip? Yes, that may turn out be a problem.

08.) If I were offered several forms of interview phone/alumni/campus... What would you recommend?

Between a telephone interview with an adcom member and an in-person alumni interview, you should always pick the latter. But, again, it really depends on how comfortable you feel.

09.) What are the most common flaws interviewees make?

See our **Top Mistakes List**.

10.) Why do some interviewers ask applicants about the other schools in their list? If, for instance, I apply to Harvard, Stanford, Wharton e Berkeley - may the adcom from Berkeley feel that I see their School as a back-up option, and ding me because of that?

Most of the people to whom I raised that issue said it's all about their research ("to whom they lose students"; "which programs/b-schools are their competitors"). Your answer possibly won't impact on your admission.

Obviously, indirectly, they are assessing your level of confidence or sense of realism, huh?

11.) Would you advise an interviewee to show additional material during the interview?

It's not usual. Although it won't hurt, I don't recommend taking something unless exceptionally necessary or elucidative ("Less is more".)

12.) I've just been sent an email with instructions to search names of interviewers from CBS. There is a list with 3 names. What should I do?

You're allowed to do up to 3 searches, that is, you should get 9 names to choose from. Send us the list. We can help you eliminate the pain-in-the-neck ones. When that is not possible, please, consider basic research on Google or www.linkedin.com

13.) School XYZ asks applicants to mention the other schools to which they are applying. Should I be 100% transparent? Any tip?

Two reasons justify this requirement: (i.) the school does research to know competition; (ii.) the school tests coherence / rationale in applicant's choices.

I'd be concerned only about (ii.). If you did sound research on WHY-School X and post-MBA position, I figure you have good arguments to present.

Some approaches will demand your attention. If you're admitted to HBS and Wharton, which will you choose?" We do not believe this question is in the interviewer's list and we do not see it come from an Adcom member. No one will DING you at Wharton just because the interviewer thinks you're going to Harvard if admitted to both. You must show them that you know the Wharton program in depth, that you know how to work in groups, and that you are not arrogant. Every interviewer should know that it is NOT realistic to apply to only two schools and that YES, the applicant's preference is what matters the least at that moment of the interview. Thus, do not say promptly "I will go to Wharton!", even if that is true. Then what should you say? *"Wow; that would indeed be a privilege. I believe in the rationale of my choices and I know both schools suit my expectations. I would have to visit them and decide in loco".* OR *"I wish! This application process is a collective decision, you know. Besides*



visiting the schools I must also address my wife's needs. I'd rather cross this bridge when / if I come to it".

In SUM: interviewers should be exclusively concerned about knowing whether the applicant will be a good student in their school in the future.

14.) I've read your collection of feedbacks on Kellogg interviews. One question that is still hard to approach is "What you think that might be a weakness on your application?"

Did you notice that one of the applicants said he was caught by surprise by this question? Sad, since this is an old question. It is difficult, but it is old.

Well, in the end, it is always about the essence: it is less about your 'weakness' than about what you can sell by revealing it. What is the message you want to insert in the interviewer's brain?

Here is one among the many types of bananas you can sell. How do you do that? Let's ask Aristotle for help. His Rhetoric lessons are valid for both written and spoken communications.

Banana - MY APPRECIATION of the LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Disclaimer: my customer has time to spend in front of my stand: **5-7 minutes**.

TOOL	SPEECH
Lead Sentence i.) Build a mental frame to help your interviewer's ear follow your brain; ii.) An effective salesman will conquer the customer before offering him something;	<p>The whole process, you know, of doing this application is a rewarding self-awareness exercise.</p> <p>Despite the long hours I spent on this, I must say, and I am sure you will agree with me, 'pain in the ass' MBA application, right now when I look back, I can say that I had a terrific opportunity to evaluate what really matters to me. As you could see when I said about X (team assignment) ->blabla -> people matter.</p>
Development / Support Engage their brain in a CONTEXT. Use an IMAGE;	<p>I really appreciated the Uni-9 learning environment (blablabla)</p> <p>My most vivid memories of Uni-9 years are those when (blablabla)</p>
Conclusion 'How about a banana?'	<p>So, when I think what I should have done to get a more competitive candidacy, I should have saved time in my schedule to visit X.</p> <p>Now I would know better how to persuade you that Kellogg environment balbalbala.</p> <p>X, MBA Kellogg, told me how (blablabla)</p>



Considerations:

- a.) Do not mistake one question for another. “*What is your most noticeable weakness?*” is a different question;
- b.) Perhaps the interviewer has identified one weakness of yours. Be polite, agree with him, but bring insights to support your statement;
- c.) “*I should have had an international experience*” is a ridiculous explanation to a critical interviewer, but it may be acceptable to some. You must feel their profile before providing your answer;
- d.) “*Weakness as a disguised strength?*” Perfectionist, anxious, or too self-demanding: I don’t think so;
- e.) PERHAPS you can play the ‘*listener*’: “but I believe it’s a perception of someone who is a novice at this truly arts craft, MBA application - you most certainly have a different perspective...;”
- f.) If you say “I should have gotten a 750 rather than 700”, you deserve a DING right away;

Our final suggestion: do not answer as Woody Allen: “My only regret in life is that I wasn’t born someone else” or “My only regret in life was to hire **Megaron**”.

15.) I have a doubt. Do people openly mention your help (Megaron) in their application? Do they say in the interview that you helped them?

I doubt someone will ask you: “Who helped you with the *essays*?” - It is a make believe game. Actually, some schools encourage application consultants (Tuck and Chicago, for example); others, such HBS and Stanford criticize *consultants’* services.

I know many would go to the interview wearing “I love Megaron!” t-shirt. We thank you deeply, but that is not necessary.

In one info session of HBS, someone in the audience asked about application and test preparation. Among the alumni, one said, “I bought a book, studied it for one weekend, and got a 730”.

We were not there, but I know three former students of ours were. I know that (i.) GMAT was not easy for any of them. (ii.) They all worked hard on their essays with us. One of them (away from the microphone) later indicated Megaron. No criticism whatsoever; much the other way round. I know under his sweater there was another shirt, “I Love Mirian too!”

Keep Running