Interviews

What to expect and how to prepare

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Think of the interview as a supplement to your application

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<th>WHAT WE GET FROM THE APPLICATION</th>
<th>WHAT WE GET FROM THE INTERVIEW</th>
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<td>• Motivation</td>
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<td>• Clinical exposure</td>
<td>• Communication skill/empathy</td>
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<td>• Service</td>
<td>• How well you know yourself</td>
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<td>• Leadership</td>
<td>• Problem solving skill</td>
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<td>• Research</td>
<td>• Evidence of curiosity</td>
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<td>• Other’s opinions of you</td>
<td>• Understanding what you are getting into</td>
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<td>• Academic ability</td>
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Panel interviews
• 3 Interviewers to 1 applicant

30 minutes

All interviewers except for one blinded to MCAT and GPA
Reasons for Panel Interviews

- Minimize interviewer bias
- Increase reliability of evaluations
- Interviewers bring different perspectives and experiences
Questions to Expect:

- **Motivation** = passion for the career; well thought through
  - Will you weather stress and disappointment?

- **Role play** = communication skills, empathy, analytical
  - Can we picture you as a physician?

- **Understanding of medicine** = Do you know what your life will be like?
  - Are you likely to enjoy your career or be disillusioned?

- **Health care delivery & Social determinants of Health** = Are you paying attention? What are the current issues? Why are there differences in the care people receive?
  - Also demonstrates curiosity and self-directed lifelong learning
Communication and interpersonal skills

- Listen actively
- Make yourself understood
- Be clear and don’t ramble
- Put yourself in someone else’s shoes
- Respect others’ opinions
- Allow for different values
- Don’t judge
How well do you know yourself?

- What are you really good at?
- What are you working on?
- What should you be working on?
- What have you done with feedback you’ve received?
- In what ways are you suited for a career in medicine?
Problem solving skills

How do you approach something unfamiliar?

- Define the problem
- What do you know?
- What do you need to know?
- How are you going to gather information?
- What will you do with information?

- Think out loud
- Process is more important than answer
- Support solutions with information gathered
- Generate alternative solutions
It is fine to say: “I don’t know,”

Then say, “Here’s how I would find out.”
Consider context of person’s issue
Don’t jump to solution
What are the pertinent socio-economic factors?
How does the person FEEL about the situation and why?
Engage
Example: a patient who has lung disease and is doing something unhealthy (e.g. smoking)

- Don’t get too medical (e.g. when do you cough? Do you bring up phlegm?)
- Go for context:
  - How does smoking affect you?
  - How do you feel after you smoke?
  - How are you coping with this illness/situation?
  - What is your support system?
Understanding what you are getting into particularly in the United States

- What types of medical practices are there?
  - How does rural medicine differ from academic medicine?

- Who pays for medical care? How?

- How has technology changed medicine? (for better or worse)

- How will health care likely be delivered in the near future?

- What frustrates doctors?

- What is the role of a doctor in a community?
General Advice

- When using patient examples, don’t repeat the examples from your application. We already know those. Suggests limited experience.

- Be spontaneous. Don’t try to tell us what you think we want to hear. Being prepared and being rehearsed are different.

- Long vs short answers (broad brush strokes vs pointillism)

- Prepare points you want to make and share them at the end of the interview.

- Don’t ask questions because you think you are supposed to.
General Advice

- Fly in the night before and give yourself plenty of time to get to the airport after your interview.
- Business formal is common. Wear comfortable and professional attire (that includes shoes).
- Be courteous and respectful to everyone you meet.
- Have fun!
Questions