



# INTERNATIONAL TESTER'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE INTERVIEWS

## **STEP 1      DETERMINE WHAT TYPE OF INTERVIEW YOU ARE HAVING**

There are essentially 2 types of interviews. The first is a formal interview with a member of the admissions board or a Dean. This type is held at the school and should be considered very formal. The second is usually with an alumni of the school and is less formal and more about getting a more well rounded picture of who you are as a prospective student. Although less formal usually, you must still be prepared for an interviewer who is naturally formal and may be asking you a list of questions rather than having a conversation with you.

## **STEP 2      GATHER YOUR AMMUNITION**

You should be prepared to take your application package including your resume, essays, SAT scores, School Grades and any other relevant information. The interviewer may or may not ask for this information, but it is better to be prepared with it. You also should have done your homework about the school and know where it is your applying, any ignorance on your part will be seen as a lack of real interest in the school. I recently had a student who was preparing for an interview at Northwestern but he/she had no idea where in the United States it was located (Psst , it's in Chicago). You don't need to be able to sing the school's song (although it couldn't hurt), but you should know the general statistics and programs offered especially the program to which you are applying. Look up the program and see what courses you would be interested in the most. Be able to drop a Professor's name and know about his/her field of interest.

## **STEP 3      DRESS TO IMPRESS**

This does not mean that you need to wear a 3 piece suit, but rather you should be dressed in your school uniform (if there is one) preferably wrinkle and stain free. If you don't have a school uniform then in business casual, which is dress pants/skirt, a button down shirt/blouse, good shoes and perhaps a jacket. You want to look neat and organized in your appearance, not like you just rolled out of bed and came to the interview as an afterthought. Clean hair, not too much make-up or jewelry, you want to make a good impression, but don't worry if your hair is pink or you have a nose piercing, those are things that make you unique and memorable. This is not to suggest that if you don't have pink hair, you should get some , but that you should still look like yourself at the interview.

Plan ahead and set aside a nice outfit that is clean and pressed so you don't have to worry about it at the last minute.

## **STEP 4**

### **PREPARE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF**

You would be surprised how many students go to interviews and have not really thought about why they are going to university (because my Mom is making me is not a good reason), what they want to do with their lives (become rich is not good enough) or any of the myriad questions that an interviewer may ask. It is important to **THINK** about the kind of answers you want to present the interviewer because these answers will be the basis of his or her impression of you. Taking too long to answer, not answering the question asked, or saying "I never thought about it" are not the best ways to impress the interviewer. It is impossible to guess exactly what questions will be asked but there are some common questions that you should be prepared to answer. You **WON'T** be asked all of these. Usually 2-4 questions are asked to prompt a conversation. If you would like to know what a good answer sounds like send me an e-mail with specific questions you are worried about and I will make video. Contact me at

**M@INTERNATIONALTESTER.COM**

1. Tell me about yourself
2. What are your favorite subjects? Why?
3. What extracurricular activities do you enjoy? Why?
4. What do you like to do when you are not studying?
5. What have you done to prepare for college?
6. Tell me about your family.
7. What is your favorite book? Author?
8. How do you think your friends and family would describe you?
9. Who do you admire most? Why?
10. What are your strengths? Weaknesses?
11. What do you think about (insert current event)?
12. What do you want to do in the future?
13. Which of your accomplishments are you most proud of?
14. If you could meet any important person from the past or present, who would it be and why?
15. Why do you want to come to this college?
16. How do you see yourself fitting into this college?
17. What has been your greatest (or worst) experience in high school?
18. What kinds of growth do you see in yourself over the next 4 years?
19. If I visited your high school, what type of community would I find there, and how do you fit into this community?
20. What might your teachers say about your strengths and weaknesses?
21. What books or articles have you read in the past year that have had special meaning for you?
22. What events or experiences have been the most crucial in molding the person you are today?
23. What do you see as a good life for you 20 years from now?

## QUESTIONS CONTINUED

24. Last year we had 10,000 applicants and only accepted 2,000; why should you be accepted into this school?

25. If you were unable to go to college, what else would you do with your life?

26. What do you feel is the purpose of a college education?

27. What is the role of student on a college campus and in the greater community?

28. What can you tell me about my school?

29. What other schools have you applied to?

**\*\* This question is to determine how serious you are about the school your interviewing with. Try to be tactful if the school is not your first choice (don't insult the school) and frame your answer with comparable schools and perhaps 1 dream school but no more. If it appears the interviewing school is a "safety" school they may feel your lack of interest and suddenly lose interest in you as well.**

30. Do you have any questions?

**\*\* This question is to determine just how interested you are in the school. Come to your interview with a list of INTELLIGENT questions (asking about how easy it is to pass or about joining drinking clubs are probably not the right tone) that show you have a real interest in the school.**

### DO

Schedule an interview- even if it is optional

Let the conversation flow naturally—don't come in with an agenda of topics you want to discuss.

Explain any weak points on your resume or application

Be enthusiastic about the college

Share what you are passionate about

Be prepared to be honest and open about who you really are and where your interests lie

Order a drink if you are meeting at a coffee shop (otherwise don't eat or drink unless offered refreshments by the interviewer)

Dress well but comfortably

Ask questions about the school

Be prepared

### DON'T

Be late

Complain about the process of applying to university

Ask obvious questions such as where the school is located or how much does it cost

Chew gum

Curse

Lie

Pretend to be someone you are not

Be Rude

Worry- this is not life and death