

TOP 10 COMMON MED SCHOOL INTERVIEWING ERRORS

(or, what *not* to do in your interviews...)

10. **Not having a focused answer** to the question of why you want to be a doctor. Telling a long narrative that doesn't immediately answer the question.
"When I was one, I liked to stare at medicine bottles... When I was two, I got a toy stethoscope... When I was three, I..."
9. **Fear of being too personal.**
"I know you just asked me about the values I care about, but did I mention that I got a 39 on the MCAT and I was an officer of Club A, the captain of Team B and my GPA is 3.8?"
8. **Being too casual or "chummy."**
"Hey there, Jim, did you see the Red Sox game last night?"
7. **Not being detailed enough** when discussing your volunteer/clinical experiences.
"Patients are just so wonderful. I love to help them."
6. **Not holding yourself accountable** for your academic record.
"That professor was impossible to get a good grade from." Or, "I was so involved in my other activities, my schedule was just crazy!" (This error can sometimes apply your academic successes as well as failures).
5. **Lack of enthusiasm** for medicine. *"I ruled out a business career after my internship last summer..."* (Note: Lack of enthusiasm can also come into play when you're pursuing medicine for someone else's reasons, not your own).
4. **Being unaware of, or unable to comment on, the down-sides** of medicine. *"Problems in healthcare? I guess it would be something about malpractice or insurance coverage, but I don't really know. Isn't medicine the noblest of professions?"*
3. **Being indifferent or ignorant** about a particular school.
"I'm really excited about the new trend toward problem-based learning in medical education... Oh, your pre-clinical years are taught in lecture format? Oh..."
2. **Treating med students and administrative help differently** than senior faculty.
"When am I going to get to see the Dean?"
1. **Not letting the interviewer lead** the interview.
(See # 9 above. Or, "Interesting question... That reminds me of something I wanted to talk about...so I'm sure you won't mind if I change the subject..."

SEE OTHER SIDE FOR CORRESPONDING SUGGESTIONS

10 SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MED SCHOOL INTERVIEW

10. Prepare a **succinct** way of describing your interest and path toward applying to medical school. It might help to have a **short version** (under 5 mins) and a **longer version** to use only if your interviewer seems intrigued.
9. Reveal your **personality, family background, interests, passions**— your **unique** self.
8. Be **appropriately professional**. Remember, these people are not your colleagues.
7. Describe **specific highlights of your volunteer and clinical experience**. Provide examples, anecdotes, and illustrations.
6. **Own your transcript**. Think about what you've learned through your academic successes and failure, how you are a better student now than when you came to Princeton.
5. Express **enthusiasm** for the aspects of medicine most appealing to you.
4. Be aware of, and reasonably articulate about, **current issues** in healthcare.
3. **Do your research** about each school you visit.
2. **Treat everyone you meet during the interview and application process with respect**.
1. Allow yourself to be interviewed. Answer the questions you are asked, without pushing your own agenda. This gives you a chance to demonstrate your **listening skills, flexibility, and knowledge** without being arrogant, pushy, or rehearsed.

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.”

~e.e. cummings