



## **Student Guide to the Health Professions Interview Process**

After an interview appointment is confirmed, it is imperative for you to fully prepare for it. Below are important areas to cover in your preparation.

### **Plan For Your Absence at Work and/or Class**

- Arrange to make up missed course work or get coverage for your other responsibilities.
- Make travel arrangements if necessary.

### **Know Yourself**

- Take time to reflect on all of the experiences that brought you to pursue this path.
- Review all of the materials you submitted and be prepared to discuss them in greater detail (i.e., think of concrete/specific examples).
- Understand your strengths and weaknesses and how to convey them using specific examples.
- Be prepared to talk about your goals (e.g., “Why do you want to be a \_\_\_?”).
- Consider your responses to questions beforehand, but do not memorize your responses.

### **Educate Yourself**

- Learn about current healthcare issues in newspapers, journals and professional websites.
- Be able to demonstrate that you are aware of the issues in the field
- Helpful Physical Therapy Websites:
  - <http://www.apta.org/>
  - <https://www.tpta.org/>

### **Plan Your Attire**

- First impressions are important as well as how you conduct yourself.
- Business attire is strongly recommended for all interviewees.

### **Interview Day**

#### **Prepare For Weather**

- Bring an umbrella (e.g., be prepared for rain).
- Allow adequate time to get to the interview

## **Arrive Early**

- Be at least 10-15 minutes early to the interview site so you will not be rushed.
- If an emergency keeps you from arriving on time, call and let them know what is happening and when you expect to arrive.
- If you are late, offer your apologies and explanation again when you arrive.

## **Remember Your Manners**

- Be polite to everyone you meet—including secretaries, tour guides and other interviewees.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Do not eat, drink or chew gum.
- Introduce yourself, shake hands firmly and make and maintain eye contact.
- Relax and smile at appropriate times.
- Monitor your speech patterns (e.g., informal speech that is acceptable with your friends is not appropriate for an interview).
- Confirm names of everyone with whom you interview to send “thank-you” emails/notes.

## **Ask Questions**

- Always prepare specific questions tailored towards the school/program (e.g., write them down and refer back to them when necessary).

## **After Your Admissions Interview**

### **Send “Thank-You” Notes**

- Immediately send a personalized “thank-you” email/note to your interviewers.
- Reiterate your interest in the program.

### **Make The Interview A Learning Experience**

- Write down what you learned from your experience at the school.
- Review your performance and evaluate how to improve for your next interview.

## **The Type of Interview**

### **Panel**

Interviewees are interviewed by admissions committee members. These interviews are conducted in both a question and a scenario format. In these interviews, ensure eye contact is made with the individual asking questions as well as with each member of the panel.

### **The Typical Interviewer**

In general, interviews will be conducted in a panel-type format consisting of, but not limited to, faculty and area clinicians. Programs may opt to include one or more current applicable program student on the panel.

The interviewer(s) may or may not have seen your application and/or your transcript (these are called “blind” or closed interviews). Be prepared, therefore, for questions you have already addressed in your application and discuss them fully. If interviewed by a student of the school, remember to take it seriously.

### **Final Tips and Suggestions**

1. Relax and BE YOUR (most professional) SELF!
2. Listen carefully and respond to the question being asked, not the one you may be anticipating.
3. Professional attire is very important! Dress to impress.
4. Use your best communication skills, avoid rambling responses, maintain good eye contact and pay attention to your posture and gestures.
5. Do not try to second-guess your interviewer. Answer questions honestly and sincerely and do not be afraid to say, “I don’t know.”
6. Do not be afraid of silence! Remain confident and realize that natural silence is OK.
7. Do not offer excuses or rationalizations – explain your deficiencies honestly, if asked.
8. Do not draw unnecessary attention to yourself; you do not want to be noticed for the wrong reasons.
9. Have a BRIEF and POSITIVE “wrap-up line” and always thank your interviewers for their time. Try to remember the names of all of your interviewers.
10. Do not judge the quality and/or success of your interview by its length.

### **Other Resources:**

<http://www.mclennan.edu/career-services/>