

HSPVA College Interview Advice

A college interview is a time for the university to get to know you, but also a time for you to get to know the university. An interview is often optional, but you should try to participate in one, especially if the school is one of your top choices. Don't waste this amazing opportunity to be one-on-one with an "expert" of the university!

Types of interviews: On campus, Off campus, Skype, Phone

Your interviewer may be: An admissions officer, a current student, an alumnus

Although they try to match you with someone in your particular field of interest, this may not always be the case.

IN ADVANCE (Things you can start doing today!)

- Do your homework! Research the specific college/program beyond just the website.
- Have a casual "practice" interviews! Ask to and answer questions from family and friends.
- Know how you are getting to campus/interview location/skype call - and where to park!
- Determine and wear your outfit (Professional Dress)

Sample broad questions to ponder:

Why do you want to attend that particular institution?

Why are you a good fit for them?

What are your accomplishments?

What have you had a hard time with? How have you addressed it?

What are your favorite subjects in school?

What do you like to do in your free time?

What makes you, you?

Tips

- o Don't memorize answers, you want to be natural, BUT...
- o Memorize at least one non general fact about the school. Nothing shows interest more than a student that knows something specific about the program beyond what is in the college review books.
- o Prioritize what aspects of your life are most YOU and which activities are on the fringe. Don't be afraid to show who YOU are.
- o Be aware of current headlines/hot topics should it come up.
- o If possible, do a test run and know exactly where to park and how to get to the location of the interview. If not, search for detail/Google Map it!
- o Actually walk and sit in your outfit for an extended period of time in advance to make sure you are comfortable and that there are no "wardrobe malfunctions."

MORNING OF

- Eat breakfast
- Dress Professionally
- Bring with you: notepad/legal pad, pen, copy of resume
 - o Some universities accept resumes while others don't.
 - o It doesn't hurt to have a couple questions written down in advance.

AT THE LOCATION

- Arrive at least 15 minutes early to the interview location.
- Locate the restrooms (You never know when you might have to go!)
- Take deep breaths and relax
- Set your cell phone to silent and put it away! You can do it!

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Be you- but a confident and descriptive you.
- Don't brag, but proudly state your achievements.
- Have a conversation. Don't try to remember your "perfect" responses.
- Ask questions!
- Be yourself. Don't try to answer questions based on what you think the interviewer wants to hear.

THE NEXT DAY

- Mail out a handwritten thank you note. Remember to sign the note legibly with your name! If you do not have contact information, at the very least you should send an e-mail.

REMEMBER

- The interviewer wants to get to know YOU. They want you to do WELL!
- It is an information exchange - not an interrogation.
- The interview does not make an academic evaluation - that is in your transcript
- Through a natural conversation, the interview seeks to determine genuine
 - o motivation levels
 - o depth of interest in activities
 - o degree of college/university knowledge
 - o communication skills (Both verbal and nonverbal)
 - o involvement in the community

RELAX! You can DO THIS!