



ACE YOUR COLLEGE INTERVIEW

by the student editors of ***CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLLEGE & GET ACCEPTED!***
a Students Helping Students™ book

For most schools, the interview is an optional part of the application process. But it's such a great opportunity to both enhance your application and find out more about the school that we definitely suggest you interview with as many colleges as possible. Sure, it might be somewhat intimidating and not all interviewers are as friendly as you'd like, but it's worth the extra effort.

And don't feel alone if you're stressed out at the prospect of meeting one-on-one with a person who might impact your acceptance chances—we've all been there. Try to focus on the interview as being a two-sided dialogue and keep in mind that even if it goes poorly, it won't single-handedly affect the outcome of your application.

Here are some ideas to help you get through your interviews with flying colors:

- The best way to prepare for an interview is to anticipate the questions you might be asked and to think about your responses ahead of time. Here are some common ones:
 - Why do you want to go to this school?
 - What other schools are you considering?
 - What are you thinking of studying?
 - What do you think are your strengths and weaknesses?
 - So I see on your application that you are active in (insert an activity)—tell me more about it.
 - What were some of your favorite classes this year?
 - I read your essay about (insert your topic)—tell me more about that.
- There are enough horror stories about arriving late to interviews, getting lost, missing the appointment, and so on that you don't need to add yours to the pile. Make sure that you know where you're going, leave with plenty of extra time, confirm your meeting in advance, and bring a copy of your resume, application, and essays, just in case.
- The interview is your shot to show what you're like in person—don't waste it by trying to be some way that you think you're supposed to be. You're you and you're who the interviewer is interested in meeting. Be honest, be open, be yourself, and remember that there's no right way to do this.

"My interviewers ranged from 'wow this guy is awesome!' to 'T-minus fifteen minutes until this painful experience is over.' Try to be relaxed and honest. It's not as if these people are trying to humiliate you. They simply want to bring out your character."

**Recent Grad,
Princeton University**

- Think about the interview as a conversation, rather than an interrogation. Your interviewer will ask you some questions but you should definitely ask some questions in return. Make sure to ask things that aren't obvious or those that you could've found out by simply going to the school's website. For example, "How many students go to this school?" is not as impressive as asking something more specific like: "I've read that 60% of all students go abroad and I was wondering what kind of programs are available and supported by the college?" It's also a good idea to ask your interviewer some questions about his or her personal experience with the school, especially if you're interviewing with an alumnus or a student.
- Always follow up after your interview. It's appropriate to send a thank-you note by mail, saying that you appreciate the person taking the time to meet with you and you enjoyed your conversation.

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