How to Interview for Medicine (and Dentistry): A Workshop

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Agenda

1. Goals and styles of interview (MMI, panel, hybrid, etc)
2. Styles of questions
3. Examples and structure review
4. Review of red flags
5. Q&A

About us: Ariel

HBSc. U of T, Pathobiology specialist, New college

MD Western (2019)

Residency U of T, Anatomical pathology (2019-now)

Application consultant at MD Consultants

MCAT tutor Next Step Test Prep

About us: Ariel

HBSc.	U of T, Pathobiology specialist, New college (applied to 8 medical schools) (Admissions award at UWO)
MD	Western (2019) (applied to 30 residency positions) (U of T: 6 spots, ~45 app)
Residency	U of T, Anatomical pathology (2019-now)

Application consultant at MD Consultants, etc (~50)

MCAT tutor Next Step Test Prep (~10)

About us: Emily

HB.A. U of T, English Specialist

M.A. U of T, English & Creative Writing

Poet, TA, Editor, Writer

8+ years of experience specifically editing grad/professional school applications

Community member interview panelist

Interview coach with an acceptance rate of **89.2%** last cycle (@egmedprep on Instagram)

Why you should **NOT** listen to us

There are exceptions to the roles

There is always some subjectivity involved in interviews

We don’t represent any schools’ admission committee

The gold standard is always to check with the school.

HOW TO GET INTO MEDICAL SCHOOL

GPA

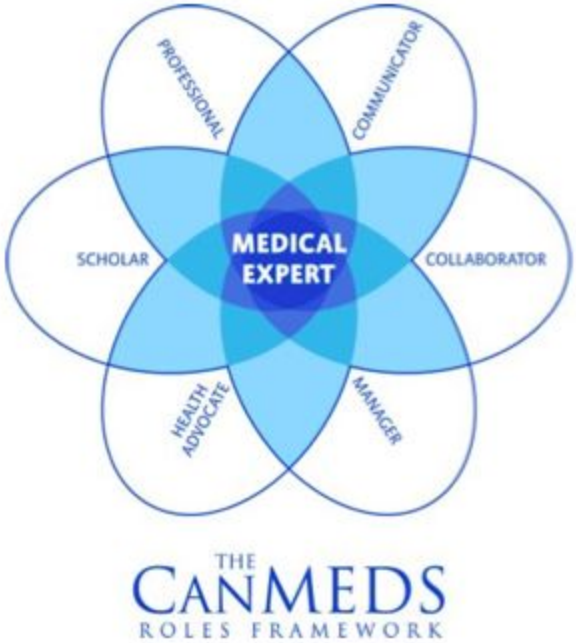
MCAT

+/- Casper

+/- essays

+ Interview (panel, MMI, etc.)

+/- resume



How to get into dental school

GPA

DAT

+/- Casper
+/- essays
+ Interview (panel, MMI, etc.)
+/- resume

ACFD educational framework for the development of competency in dental programs

ASSOCIATION of CANADIAN FACULTIES of DENTISTRY | L'ASSOCIATION des FACULTÉS DENTAIRES du CANADA

MMI (Multiple Mini Interview)

And myths about interview formats

MMI (Multiple Mini Interview)

- Timed-circuit, 8-10 stations, 8 min each with 2 min break
- 1 evaluator/ station
- 1 question/ station + follow up questions as time allows
- Developed in 2004 in McMaster, mimics med student OSCE.
- Can include discussions such as communication, collaboration, ethics, health policy, critical thinking, awareness of social health issues, personal qualities
- Not too different as long as you **do not get stressed by the format**
- **McMaster, Calgary, McGill, Manitoba, Alberta, Queen's**

“Traditional” Panel format

- Panel = 1 room
- Usually 40-50 minutes in length.
- Approx. 3 person panel.
- Ottawa and Western, and many other schools…
- Ex: Western has 3 panelists, one physician, one M3/M4, one “community member”, with a list of questions.

Myths about formats

“You can’t get personal questions on an MMI”

“The interviewer will know my CV in detail”

What an interview Accomplishes:

It should prove, using concrete examples (ie. stuff from your CV/ABS) why you would be suited for the role (be a good doctor/medical student.)

It should set you apart from other candidates.

Red flag check

Vibe check

Question Types

- **Personal / Behavioural Questions**
  - “Tell me about a time you worked on a team,” “What is your greatest weakness?”
- **Ethics / Policy Questions**
  - “Would you be in favour of Canada moving to a privatized model of healthcare. Why or why not?”
- **Standard Questions**
  - “Tell me about yourself,” “Why have you chosen to pursue a career in medicine?”
- **Seemingly Impersonal / Unconventional Questions**
  - “If you could be any flavour of ice cream, which flavor would you be?”, “Who is someone you consider to be your role model?”
- **Acting / Task-based Stations**

Personal/Behavioural Question

What is one quality that you think is essential for physicians to have? Do you have that quality?

An Imperfect Answer:

- **S**ituation - basics of who/what/when/where
- **T**ask - what was your goal?
- **A**ction - what did you do and how did you do it?
- **R**esult - what was the outcome?

+ What did you learn?

+ How will you use these transferable skills in a medical/dental context?

There are infinite questions, how can I prepare?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Activity	The quality it illustrates that is also desirable in your future profession	**S**ituation	**T**ask	**A**ction	**R**esult	Explicitly connect quality to future profession
Volunteer tutor	communicator, teacher	taught math to kids from lower income families, one kid had trouble understanding long division	had to help kid understand long division for upcoming test	used his eraser collection to help him visualize the problem, showed him how lining his work up properly makes the problem easier to manage, told him that I also had problems with long division when I was in fourth grade, told him he could email me with any questions	Kid said he sometimes felt stupid asking questions in the past, but he felt like he could ask me stupid questions because we would just laugh about it together. He ended up getting 20% higher on his test than he did on his last test.	Doctors need to be able to communica difficult concepts to people of all differe ages and educational backgrounds. Patients are more likely to follow medic advice if they understand why they hav been given that advice. Patients also n likely to share important personal information if they feel comfortable ope up and communicating with their physicians. Doctors are also teachers. teach students, residents, junior doctor
	professional					
	advocate					
	scholar					
	collaborator					
	equitable					
	teacher					
	resource manager					

Common Mistakes: Personal Questions

- Lack of detail in the “action” section of the STAR story
- Being negative about yourself or others
- Forgetting to connect to medicine
- Picking a story that is too big for the question
- Speaking too quickly
- Not paying attention to the reason the question is being asked
- Blaming others (in conflict questions)
- Using “we” instead of “I”
- Using the word “but”
- Not centering your own accomplishments

Unconventional / Seemingly Impersonal Questions Are Actually Personal Questions in Disguise

- Find a way to insert a STAR story. It’s always about YOU.

  “What do you think the most important medical invention in the last 100 years?”

Tell me about yourself

Do:

- Briefly include your educational background
- Talk about the skills and qualities you have that make you well suited to medicine/dentistry
- Tease the rest of your interview
- Highlight your strengths/accomplishments
- Mention some hobbies/what you like to do for fun
- Be unique
- Stay focused on medicine/dentistry

Dont:

- Tell a story about your mom/sister/father/uncle/grandma who had a disease/health condition
- Think that you have to tell your life story in chronological order
- Reach too far back into the past

PROHIBITED QUESTIONS

Under federal law it is illegal for employers to make decisions based on the following:

- Age
- Citizenship
- Creed/Religion
- Disability
- Family Status
- Marital Status
- Medical Information
- Race
- Record of Offences
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

You do not have to answer questions that directly ask you for this information*

https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/eng/content/guide-screening-and-selection-employment

Ethics / Policy Questions

East Vancouver is home to “Sugar Mountain,” a tent city on which hundreds of homeless individuals live in tents and makeshift homes. In November of 2017, Vancouver firefighters raided the tent city, removing stoves and heating devices from tents. In a press release, the city argued that “fuel-powered appliances present significant hazards when used inside enclosed, fabric spaces,” yet the raid left hundreds of people without any means of cooking or staying warm. Do you think the fire department was justified in the raid?

An Imperfect Answer:

Ethics/Policy Structure

1. Plan layout
2. I strongly value _____ because
3. I also strongly value _____ because
4. Some pros of this policy/decision are _____
5. Some cons of this policy/decision are _____ (include worst case scenario if you were to go against values A and B, include stakeholders)
6. Because I value both Value A and Value B, I propose Solution

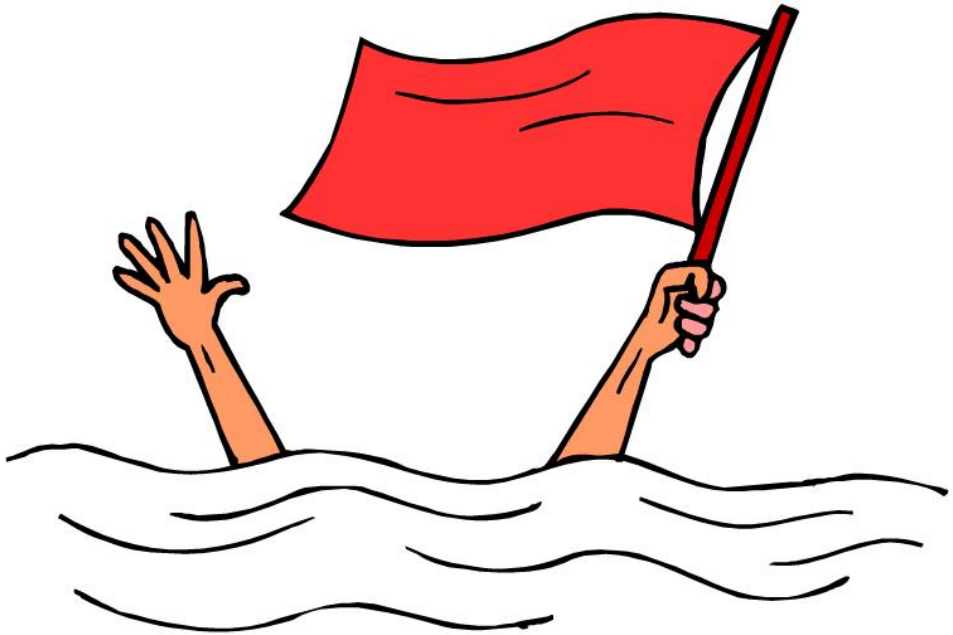
   Or… Given (information) I would _____. Given (alt. information) I would____.

Common Mistakes: Ethics/Policy Questions

- Being too one-sided
- Relying on law or rules rather than explaining your values/morals
- Not presenting an alternative policy / solution
- Not signposting your answer at the beginning
- Missing key stakeholders
- Ignoring patients (or not putting them first)
- Missing red flags / worst case scenarios (ie. abuse, danger, safety concerns)
- Relying on bioethics buzzwords (ie. “nonmaleficence”)
- “ First I want to gather more information”

Never Ever Do This

- Blame other people
- Put down other people or professions
- Be unnecessarily negative
- Lie
- Be rude (ever)



Q&A

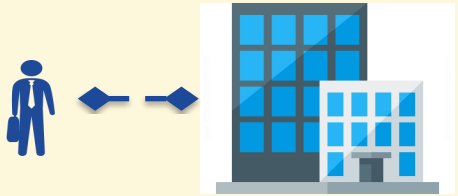
“DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR ME?”

PREPARE AT LEAST 3 QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW PANEL

CREATE QUESTIONS BASED ON YOUR RESEARCH OF THE PEOPLE AND PROGRAM

THE KEY:

ASK QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE PROGRAM TO SHOW MOTIVATION and TO HELP YOU GENUINELY LEARN MORE



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https://emilyizsak.com/editing-services-interview-prep/