College Counseling:

MAXIMIZING THE INTERVIEW



Interviewing can be an impactful way to show a school who you are and to confirm all the wonderful qualities that come through in your application.

3 KEYS TO SUCCESS

BE YOURSELF.

A successful interview will feel like a natural conversation. Be your authentic self and have fun.



BE SPECIFIC.

Share detailed examples and anecdotes. Prior to your interview, reflect about your interests and strengths, and be prepared to answer questions about who you are.

BE ENGAGED.

Be ready to provide information about yourself and your interest in the college. Ask thoughtful and open-ended questions as they arise.

5 TIPS FOR A STRONG INTERVIEW

1. ***Be prompt and courteous.*** Plan to arrive early, allowing plenty of time for travel, finding the location, and connecting with your interviewer. Sit up straight and don't fidget. Turn off your phone and put it away.

2. ***Be prepared.*** Ask your college counselor to arrange a mock interview to practice. Research the college and jot down questions beforehand. Refrain from asking questions that can easily be found on their website.

3. ***Promote yourself.*** Assume your interviewer knows very little about you. Expand on your accomplishments, interests, and strengths. Share specific examples to give your interviewer entry points for further questions or other topics of conversation.

4. ***Listen actively.*** Just as important as your ability to convey information about yourself, your attentive listening demonstrates another important communication skill.

5. ***Follow up.*** After the interview, send a thank-you note or email to your interviewer. Describe what you learned that further excites you about the school.

VIDEO PROFILES

Some colleges give you the opportunity to submit a video profile. Since this was originally intended to replace the interview, the goal is for colleges to get a better sense of who you are, in your own voice.

KEEP IN MIND:

- ***Video logistics***: Typically no more than 90 seconds to 2 minutes, the content should focus on topics that you are excited to talk about. (Check the admission website for general guidelines and prompts.) You will not be evaluated for the video's production quality so avoid relying on voice-overs. Instead, make sure you are clearly visible and audible throughout the video. Similar to the interview, colleges want to see you and how you articulate your thoughts and ideas!
- ***Submission***: The video profile can usually be uploaded through the applicant portal, which you will have access to after you submit your application. The deadline to submit might be shortly after the application deadline so plan ahead and prepare the video in advance.
- ***Know your audience***: Colleges may accept the video profile through different platforms. While some are college-specific, others (e.g. Glimpse) allow the video profile to be sent to multiple institutions. Similar to how you craft your supplemental essays, be mindful of this when filming your content.

Q&A: QUESTIONS YOU MAY HEAR ON YOUR INTERVIEW

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in our college? Why are you a good fit?
- What is your favorite academic subject? What is your least favorite? Why?
- Tell me about your high school. Is there anything you would change about it?
- What have you recently read outside of school?
- What activities do you enjoy most?
- Do you have a specific major or career plan? How did you decide that?
  State what your interests are (if you know) and that you hope to explore them further in college. Don't be afraid of being undecided, but if you are, talk about the things that interest you right now, or how you appreciate a number of different subjects.
- How have you spent your summers?
- How do you see yourself getting involved at our college?
- Have you ever failed or struggled? What did you learn about yourself?
- Is there anything you didn't mention in your application that you would like to share?

KEEP IN MIND:

Availability & Timeline: Not all schools offer interviews. Check to see if the interview is required, optional, or not offered. Then, look for interview opportunities on the admission website and schedule well in advance. Interviews are generally available from spring of junior year through winter of senior year. Some schools will contact you after your application is submitted; some will expect you to proactively schedule your interview prior to the application deadline—this is a form of demonstrated interest.

Always take the interview: If an interview is offered, take advantage of the opportunity. Not only are you demonstrating your enthusiasm and interest for the college, you are getting excellent practice for a life skill.

Interview format: Will the interview be in person or virtual? Will an admissions representative, current student, or alum conduct the interview?

Scholarship requirements: Is an interview required for a merit or leadership scholarship? Do your homework and find out. Be proactive.

Have fun with it: Your interviewer wants to get to know you! They are not trying to stump or trick you. A good interviewer wants you to feel comfortable and find commonalities.

REACH OUT.

The CoCo team is always here to help.
If you have any questions along the way, please do not hesitate to reach out to your college counselor!