

## Interviewing Tips (adapted from College Board Resource Book)

*Why colleges conduct interviews:* Often interviews are optional and sometimes a required component to the college application. The traits they are trying to glean from an interview may include: your enthusiasm for the school, your maturity and poise, your curiosity of mind, your ability to interact with and engage others in conversation. The interviewer is trying to confirm or reject what the admission officer is learning from the paper application materials. Interviewers may take notes on your interview, which can become part of your admission file. If you are on the bubble in terms of admission, a really great interview may tip you in, or vice versa.

### Help the Interviewer Find out Who You Are

- Relax
- Consider **in advance** the positive points about yourself
- Be honest and genuine
- Avoid yes or no answers

### First Impressions are Important

- Be prompt (arrive about 15 minutes early)
- Your appearance should be neat and clean. Your choice of attire should reflect the setting of the interview. If you are meeting at a coffee shop, dress in business casual attire but if you are meeting your interviewer at their Law Office, more formal attire is appropriate
- Sit tall and do not slouch
- Give a firm handshake and make eye contact
- Bring your resume and unofficial copy of your transcript
- Discuss your interests with enthusiasm

### Questions upon which you can reflect to prepare for the interview

- What are your goals?
- How does this college fit your interests and talents?
- What major are you considering and why?
- What are you most passionate about?
- Why do you want to attend college?
- What two extracurricular involvements are most important/meaningful to you?
- What academic or intellectual topics interest you?
- What types of books do you enjoy?
- Where will you be in 5-10 years?

## Other Tips

- Visit the college website prior to your interview. Prepare a list of questions in advance of the interview. A good question to ask an alum is “What did you like the most about attending XYZ college?” Or for an admission officer, “What about XYZ college do you feel is its greatest asset?” OR “What do you like about working for XYZ college.”
- Don’t be afraid to admit you do not know the answer to a question.

## After the Interview

- Thank the interviewer. Ask for a business card or contact information.
- Send a hand-written thank you note or email a thank you.

## Essay Writing Tips

- Carefully read the essay questions and be sure you answer them specifically
- Do not wait until the last minute, your essay will suffer for it
- Take time to brainstorm ideas before writing
- Read through your journal, if you keep one, an idea may come from there.
- Read through old retreat talks, essays, research papers, an idea may come from there
- Write multiple drafts and edit carefully; don’t let your Mom, Dad, friend rework your essay so much that it’s no longer your work
- Allow an adult who doesn’t know you well to read the essay. It’s good to get feedback from an impartial person
- Be yourself
- Avoid sarcasm and be carefully creative; avoid topics that could offend the reader
- Tell them something they cannot gather from other components of the application