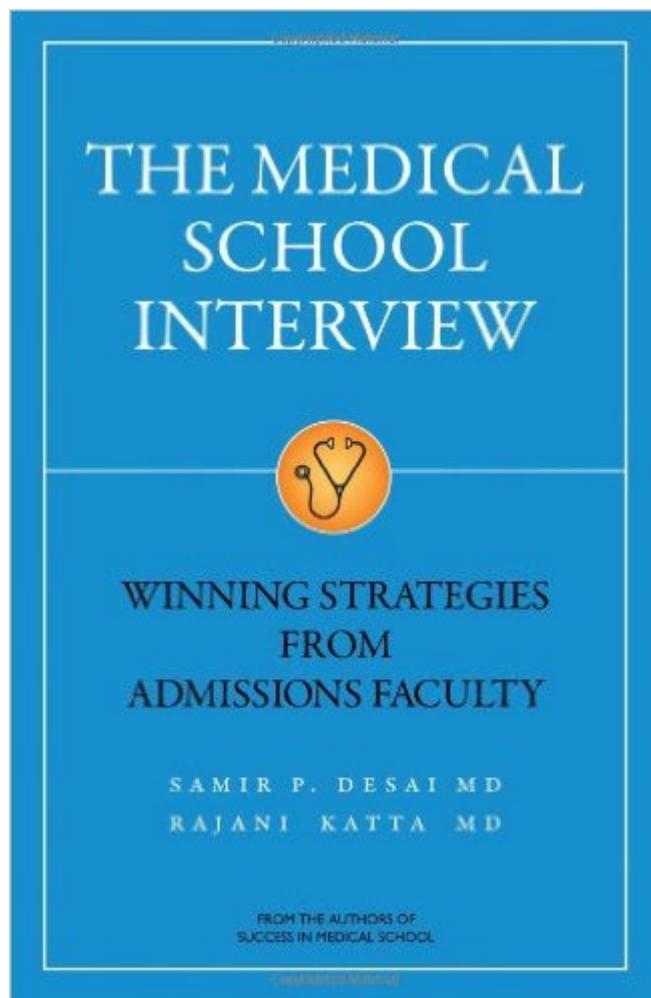


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# The Medical School Interview: Winning Strategies From Admissions Faculty



## Synopsis

Did you know that the interview is the most important factor in admissions decisions? What can you do to achieve maximum success during the interview? In 2011, the AAMC published a survey that evaluated the importance of 12 variables on admissions decisions. These variables included total MCAT scores, science and math GPA, and the interview. The interview was rated the most important factor, receiving a score of 4.5 (scale of 1 [not important] to 5 [extremely important]). High GPA and MCAT scores do not guarantee admission. In the aforementioned study, approximately 8% of applicants with undergraduate GPAs and total MCAT scores of at least 3.8 and 39, respectively, failed to gain admission. As you can see, the interview is never just a formality. It can absolutely make or break your chances of acceptance. Consider the following: "The interview is an important and integral part of the selection process," writes the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. "Faculty interviews with critical evaluations are the only method...for the assessment of the important nonacademic attributes..." writes the Penn State College of Medicine. "The Selection Committee places great importance on these evaluations in making decisions on admission." "High grades and/or MCAT scores alone are never enough," writes the LSU Shreveport School of Medicine. "For those interviewed, impressions from the personal interview are exceedingly important." What does it take to impress a medical school interviewer? We review the data on the decision-makers. What do these interviewers care about? We review the data on the criteria that matter to them? How can you convince them that you would be the right "fit" for their school? We provide concrete, practical recommendations based on this data. Our recommendations are based on data from a full spectrum of sources. We have scoured the research on medical school admissions and discussed the interview process with deans and admissions committee members to give you the detailed information needed to deliver compelling answers to interview questions. How can you best prepare for the MMI, group interview, panel interview, and behavioral interview? What qualities would make applicants less likely to be admitted? What personal qualities are most valued by admissions faculty? In our book, you'll find the answers to these questions and much more. Learn how to develop the optimal strategy for interview success and gain that extra edge. Note: This book provides an overview of the MMI. For applicants seeking detailed guidance for the Multiple Mini Interview (MMI), please see our book *Multiple Mini Interview: Winning Strategies From Admissions Faculty*.

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book has been my go-to-guide for interview preparation. Of course one can't simply read a book to prepare for an interview but reading this one cover-to-cover is a valuable preparation tool for medical school interviews. Reason 1: This book dissects sample answers that REAL admissions committee members hear over and over again. It tells us things to avoid BUT also WHY to avoid them. It then gives example of better techniques (not phrases) to answer questions. Other books often promote certain phrases but the thing is, those are the exact phrases that admission committees are tired of hearing. Reason 2: This book is a comprehensive review book. As a traditional applicant, I have not yet held a full-time job and have not had much experience with interviews. This book not only tells you about the content of your answers but it tells you how to dress, shake hands, organize your answers (ex. S.T.A.R. technique which is a well-known business school interview method), and common pitfalls which are NOT THAT obvious. Reason #3: This book is written by medical school admission faculty at highly ranked institutions but, in addition, they include snippets (quotes) on every page from other admission committee members to support their claims. Furthermore, you can tell they pooled from peer-reviewed studies (they cite them at the end) and that they have an extensive number of sources. Questions they explore are what are the most important interpersonal skills that medical schools value, what qualities do schools view as most important in applicants, etc, etc. Bottom Line: This book contains everything you need in a medical school interview book. If I were to ask for a perfect one, this would be the one to go to. Nothing but praise for this book! Also, this author has also written other books about Success in Medical School and Matching into Residency. Thanks to this book, I now know I will be buying those as well!

As a re-applicant, I wanted to make sure that I was well prepared for my interviews. I have heard so many stories of students receiving multiple interview invites and not gaining admission into medical school because of poor interview skills. To add to my nervousness, I was a non-traditional applicant and really had to rely on finding a good book since I did not have access to a premedical advisor. I will admit that I have read 3 interview books and without a doubt *The Medical Interview* is the best and most comprehensive. I love the fact that this book backs up its data from numerous studies, and even provides advice from admission officers around the country. The part that really helped me was how the book addressed how to approach the traditional and MMI interview. I have had both types of interviews and can say that this book **REALLY** helps. It highlights hypothetical questions (many of which were on my interview), and provides excellent advice on how to approach them.

The advice and 'rules' within this book are invaluable to those preparing for medical school interviews. In my opinion, it is the most comprehensive book on the market and should be a must read for every medical school applicant. The book discusses in great detail how to prepare for a variety of interview formats and how to strengthen responses to typical (and not so typical) medical school interview questions. In addition, the book also offers 'inside' advice from a variety of admissions officers and tips on how to conduct yourself throughout the entire interview day. Having gone through the medical school application process twice (after my first attempt was unsuccessful), I could not recommend this book more highly. I truly wish I had access to this book sooner, as it would have helped tremendously.

The best preparation for medical school interviews is preparation... no duh right? But really, do your mock interviews religiously - everyday until the interview. Talk to yourself in the mirror. Record yourself, then listen. Laugh, revise. Repeat. Oh right, about the book... it's nice start. Read everything again and again and again. Get the picture? Good luck, guys.

There are a lot of direct quotes from admissions committee members in this book, which is very helpful and better than receiving advice and interview tips from those who are not on the voting admissions committee. I wish I had found this book before my first school interview. I highly recommend this to anyone, especially if you have not had prior experience in interviewing for med schools.

I thought this was an okay. It had a handful of decent tips, but a lot of the information there was obvious. For premeds prepping for interviews, the best thing I'd recommend is doing a mock-interview with someone from your school if you can and go through your answers and how you can improve them. Also, looking at SDN for what are typical questions that pop up and prepare how you'd answer.

I am a health communication professor and I work closely with the university's premed program. I sometimes do trainings prepping the students for their med school interviews and many of my students have been successfully admitted to med school. I have found this book, along with *Multiple Mini Interview (MMI): Winning Strategies from Admissions Faculty* to be the 2 essential books of prepping for med school. The best thing you can do for yourself is buying these 2 books, reading them thoroughly, and practicing more than once. Start with the general one, and spend some serious time on it. Don't skip the 'why do you want to be a doctor' and 'what is professionalism' sections, they are gold! Then if you are informed that you will have an MMI, go ahead and read the other one. If you won't have an MMI, I would still consider browsing through it because it gives you interesting ethical questions to think on, which should get your medical communication juices flowing and ready for an interview! As someone who helps train prospective med school students, I want to emphasize that whatever book you buy, you need to practice. Practice out loud and hopefully to another person who is listening to you and providing feedback.

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