



# The Medical School Interview: Winning Strategies from Admissions Faculty

*Samir P. Desai, Rajani Katta*

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**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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