




Interview Preparation

An Overview




American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
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PHARMACY STUDENT FORUM™

MCM WORKSHOP: Evaluating Your Interview Skills



44th ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting & Exhibition
 Venetian Palace and Sencs Expo Center
 Las Vegas, Nevada
 December 9-10, 2009

**Sunday 12/6/09
12:30 - 1:50 p.m.**

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Objectives

- List research topics that may be helpful in narrowing your search for a residency program
- Explain good practices for communicating with prospective residency programs
- Identify proper interviewing techniques
- Compare good and bad interview styles
- Describe different types of interview
- Demonstrate how to look and act during an interview


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Outline

- **Preparation and Communication**
 - Self Assessment
 - Research
 - Communicating with the program
- **Types of Interview**
 - What types of interviews programs use
 - On-site assessment
- **The Interview**
 - Dressing for the interview
 - What to expect on the itinerary
 - Interviewer and interviewee questions

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Speakers



Beth Phillips, Pharm.D., FCCP, BCPS
 Clinical Associate Professor
 University of Georgia College of Pharmacy, Athens, GA
 Director, PGY-2 Ambulatory Care Residency Program



Tony Kessels, Pharm.D., BCPS, FASHP
 Manager, Medication Safety
 Director, Pharmacotherapy Specialty Residency Program
 Department of Pharmacy, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St. Louis, MO




Mary Hess, Pharm.D., FASHP, FCCM
 Associate Dean, Student Affairs
 Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA


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Preparation and Communication



Beth Bryles Phillips, Pharm.D., BCPS, FCCP
 Clinical Associate Professor
 Director, PGY2 Ambulatory Care Residency
 University of Georgia College of Pharmacy



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Preparing for the Interview

Start with YOU

- Know your goals
- Know why you want to participate in a residency
- Articulate experiences that will facilitate your success as a resident
- Share information about your characteristics

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Self Assessment



http://www.lawrence.edu/dept/student_dean/career/selfassessment/

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Self Assessment

- **What are my goals?**
 - Patient Care
 - Teaching
 - Scholarship
- **What type of environment appeals to me?**
 - Teaching vs. non-teaching institution
 - Academic vs. community hospital
 - College of Pharmacy affiliation
 - Institutional vs. community
 - Small vs. large program

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Self Assessment

- What are my strengths?
- What have been my favorite aspects of pharmacy so far?
- What have been my professional challenges?
 - School/studies
 - Rotations
 - Job
- What aspects have I found least rewarding?
- Do I have a geographic preference?

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Research

- Benefits of research:
 - Demonstrate your enthusiasm for the program/position.
 - Articulate how your skills, knowledge and values match those of the organization.
 - Determine if this program/position is a good fit for you.

REMEMBER: Interviewers are always impressed when you have done thorough research and can ask informed, intelligent questions about the institution and the residency program.

<http://www.jobsearchonline.bc.ca/Interviews/research.htm>

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Research



<http://deniselelay.wordpress.com/2009/08/03/putting-the-pieces-together/>

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Preparing for the Interview

Research the Program

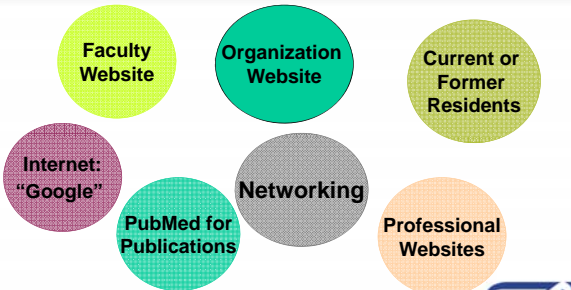
You should research:

- Organization website/contacts
- Preceptors involved
- Publications/research/awards
- Professional involvement
- Practice standards

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Research: Where to find it?



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Self Preparation

- Do I know what type of program/position best suits me?
- Am I ready to commit?
 - Hard work, Dedication, Enthusiasm
- Am I always presenting the best image of myself?
 - Beware of social networking pages
- Am I prepared for a background check when I get the position?

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Preparation

- **Prepare for questions asked of you**
 - Response limited to ~ 45-60 seconds
 - Captivating opening & closing sentences
 - Buzz words
 - Concise

Practice, practice outloud w/ friends!!

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Communication

- **Letter of interest/ Application**
- **Curriculum vitae (CV)**
 - MCM WORKSHOP: CV and Resume Writing
 - Sunday 12/6/09
 - 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
- **Thank you letter**
- **Telephone etiquette**
- **Additional contact**

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Letter of Interest

- **Introductory paragraph**
 - State position for which you are applying
 - Explain how you heard about position
 - Indicate why you are interested
- **Body**
 - Highlight attributes and strengths
 - Use examples
 - Match skills, strengths, achievements to position
- **Final paragraph**
 - Reinforce interest in position
 - Thank reader/program for consideration

<http://www.career.uh.edu/general/ucsHandouts/documents/CoverLettersforAcademicJobApplications.pdf>

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Letter of Interest

- **Tips**
 - **Use formal titles in salutation**
 - Address letter to specific person
 - Program director for residency
 - **Keep it concise**
 - **Know the application instructions**
 - Some programs ask specific questions to be addressed
 - Keep it brief and to the point
 - This may extend letter to 2 pages
 - Always send hard copy in addition to electronic unless specified

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Letter of Interest

- **Sell yourself and your achievements**
 - Use examples
 - Be sure to describe any assets that may not be obvious on your CV or other materials
 - Assume no one on the committee knows you or your accomplishments
- **Use concise, effective writing style**
 - Avoid bullet lists
 - Proper spelling and grammar is a **MUST!**
 - Institutions view LOI as demonstration of your writing abilities
 - Ask mentor(s) to proof letter and read for clarity

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Thank You Letter

- Acknowledge interview and date
- Express enthusiasm
- Highlight why you would be good for the position
- Address unresolved points if needed
- Reiterate interest in position
- Follow-up promptly
 - Within 24 hours preferred

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Thank You Letter

- **Gather contact information from interviewers**
 - Business cards
 - Write each interviewer individually if really interested in position
- **Be genuine and sincere**
 - Include at least 1 positive aspect about the program/position
 - Avoid making statements you don't firmly believe
- **Keep it short**
 - Limit to one page

Remember: Don't hesitate to tell the program if you are really interested

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Telephone Etiquette

Don't

- Smoke
- Chew gum
- Eat
- Background noise
- Interrupt speaker

DO

- Use caller title
- Take notes
- Provide short answers
- Know schedule
- Establish / meet deadlines

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Communicating with Employer

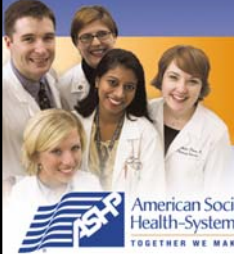
- **Additional questions or follow-up information**
 - **E-mail communication**
 - Use formal tone
 - No texting language
 - **For initial contact, conduct preliminary research first**
 - Residency directory
 - Program website
 - **Ask specific questions**
 - **Be patient**

REMEMBER: A thoughtful question will make a lasting positive impression with the program!


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Types of Interviews



Tony Kessels, Pharm. D., BCPS, FASHP
 Manager, Medication Safety
 Program Director, 2-year Pharmacotherapy Residency
 Barnes-Jewish Hospital




Typical On-site Itineraries

4 Hour Interview

- Meet with RPD
- Meet with Preceptor(s)
- Tour of facilities
- Meet with current resident(s)


Full Day Interview

- Meet with RPD
- Meet with pharmacy director
- Meet with multiple Preceptor(s)
- Tour of facilities
- Meet with current resident(s)
- Lunch



Interview Purpose

- **Program's point of view**
 - Evaluate your "fit"
 - Determine your knowledge and skills
- **Candidate's role**
 - Acquire critical information if job is best "fit" for you
 - Communicate your qualifications



Overview

- Types of interviews
- Interview environments
- Knowledge and skills assessments

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Type of Interviews

- **First or Screening Interview**
 - First interview or verbal contact
 - In person, over telephone, or webcam
 - Determines minimum requirements are met
- **Second or Follow-up Interview**
 - Usually on-site interview
 - Involves interviewing with more people
 - Ensures you have qualifications and "fit-in"

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Types of Interviews

- **One-on-one interview**
 - Most common
 - Human resources representative, supervisor, preceptor, current resident

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Types of Interviews

- **Panel Interview**
 - Be ready for multiple interviewers
 - May include other health care professionals



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Type of Interviews

- **Group interview**
 - More than one candidate
 - May be more than one interviewer
 - Remember you are being evaluated at all times
 - Active listening is important

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Type of Interviews

- **Behavioral Interview**
 - Based on job skills needed to succeed
 - Responses focus on previous behavior
 - Be sure you understand question

<http://www.free-resume-help.com/behavioral-interview-questions.html>

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Type of Interviews

- **Lunch or Dinner Interview**
 - Usually with potential boss or co-workers
 - Assesses social skills
 - Common during all-day interviews

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Type of Interviews

- **Encompassing Interview**
 - Any contact with a company employee
 - Includes telephone calls, emails, provided transportation, casual dinners, interviews, all events
 - All interactions are fair game

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Interview Environment

- **On-site**
 - Traditional
 - May involve multiple types of interviews
- **Telephone**
 - Know information for connection
 - Remember telephone etiquette
 - No outside disturbances, act as if on-site
- **Webcam**
 - Know information for connection
 - Be on time
 - No outside disturbances

<http://www.career.vt.edu/JOBSEARC/telephoneinterviews.htm>


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Knowledge and Abilities Assessment

- Determine your knowledge base
- Evaluate critical thinking skills


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Knowledge and Abilities Assessment

- **Patient case/clinical situations**
 - After reviewing a patient case be able to evaluate or discuss
 - Written or verbal
 - Pre-interview or on-site
- **Literature review**
 - Short verbal presentation with a choice of articles sent before interview


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Knowledge and Abilities Assessment

- **Written exam or quiz**
 - Multiple choice or short answer essays on clinical patient care issues
 - Pre-interview or on-site
- **Formal presentation**
 - Disease-based topic, case presentation or literature review
 - Site informs you pre-interview

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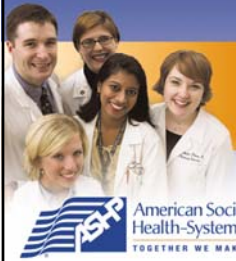
Knowledge and Abilities Assessment

- Combination formats

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The Interview



Mary Hess, Pharm. D., FASHP, FCCM
Associate Dean, Student Affairs
Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA



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Impressions



- What do you notice first?
- What do you notice second?
- First impressions take 30 seconds to make & you only get one!

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Handshakes: What they say about you



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We act the way we dress. Neglected and untidy clothes reflect a neglected and untidy mind.

~ Anonymous

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Are These Students Dressed for Showcase?



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What to Wear on an Interview


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How Men Should Dress for an Interview

- Classic Suit (solid color, dark color)
- Long sleeved shirt (white or coordinated with suit)
- Belt
- Tie
- Dark socks, conservative leather shoes
- Little or no jewelry
- Minimal cologne/aftershave
- Neatly trimmed nails
- Portfolio, briefcase

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How Women Should Dress for an Interview

- Classic Suit (solid color, dark color)
- Skirt (length long enough to sit comfortably)
- Coordinated blouse
- Neutral hose
- Conservative shoes (this includes height)
- Limited jewelry (avoid dangling)
- Professional hairstyle
- Make-up: light / natural
- Minimal perfume
- Neatly trimmed & clean nails
- Portfolio, briefcase

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Attire Tips

- Double check the fit
- Dry clean after interview
- Lay out complete outfits prior to packing
- Prevent wrinkles – use dry clean bags
- Glasses vs contacts
- Polish shoes
- Cover tattoos & piercings
- Travel in business casual



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What not to Wear

- Flip-flops or sneakers
- Visible underwear of any kind
- Shorts, jeans
- Pants that are too low-rise or tight
- Blouses that are too low-cut or short



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Which Best Fits Professional Attire?



www.sn.psu.edu Accessed Nov 22,07

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Interview Day



And these are the candidates waiting for you...

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What is the proper seated position?

- A



- B



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What questions you should expect

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in a residency
- What skills will you bring to the job?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- What has been your greatest achievement?
- Why are you interested in this program?
- Describe a difficult situation you have faced
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- What would you do if...?
- Why should we select you?



www.How-to-Change-Careers.com Accessed Oct 2009

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What you can't be asked: Illegal Interview Questions

- Race
- Color
- Gender
- Religion
- National origin
- Birthplace
- Age
- Disability
- Marital/family status

How to respond if asked:

- Answer "intent" of ?
- Change topic & avoid answering the ?
- Refuse to answer the ?

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How to ask an Illegal Question

Inappropriate

- Are you considering having children?
- Is that your maiden name?
- Does your religion restrict where you can work?

Appropriate

- Would you be willing to relocate?
- Have you ever worked under a different name?
- Are you willing to work overtime if necessary?

www.career.uci.edu Accessed Nov 25, 2007

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Response Tips

- Prepare well
- Listen carefully to the question
- Make eye contact
- Give evidence
- Avoid yes/no answers
- Don't waffle
- Avoid yes, but.... Responses
- Humor – use carefully
- Be positive & enthusiastic

www.How-to-Change-Careers.com Accessed Oct 2009

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What questions should you ask?

- Turn your self-assessment into questions
 - Resident number
 - Work space
 - Motivation
- What are your priorities?
 - Preceptor style / feedback
 - Outcome of the program
 - Preceptor leadership

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Preparing Interview Questions

- **What do you consider a deal breaker?**
 - First person pulled to fill a gap
 - Limited medical subspecialties
- **Do some preparation**
 - Review common interview questions
 - Seek out what the employer considers important

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How to Become Polished



- **Due Diligence – research**
- **Confident – know what you want**
- **Practice, practice, practice: OUT LOUD**

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Summary: Keys to Success

- **Know yourself and your goals**
- **Research potential employers**
- **Practice, practice, practice your interview technique**
- **Review your etiquette practices**

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MCM Showcase: Future Residents



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Questions? Comments?

Post to ASHP Connect Discussion Board

www.ashp.org/ashpconnect

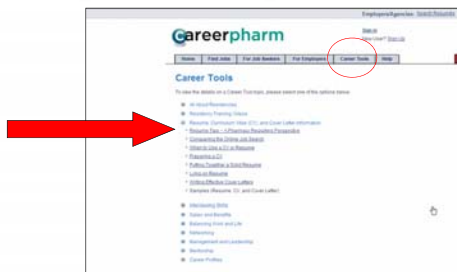
Pharmacy Student Forum → Open Discussion → Interview Preparation



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www.careerpharm.com



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