



Tips for a Successful Scholarship Interview

Just like job applications, many scholarships (though not all!) will require or request a personal interview. Interviews can last anywhere from 15 mins to an hour, depending on the scholarship. Most, however, will last 15-20 minutes. These interviews are typically held by a small group of people, like a selection committee. You will often find the interviewer(s) to be pleasant and focused on you at your interview! They'll try to put you at ease and make you comfortable, because they want to judge you at your best. Remember, they want you to succeed. A helpful tip is to keep your answers concise – they want to hear you show your skills, and describe your experiences, but avoid lengthy or rambling answers that might distract from your message.

Most importantly: **come prepared to your interview**. Prepare a response to “Tell me about yourself.” – this is one of the most common interview questions, and often the hardest to answer! Practice talking about yourself, your interests, your goals and aspirations, and what you got you to where you are today. Most important? Practice it as if it's an elevator speech – limit it to a couple of minutes at most! Know as much as possible about your course of study, career goals, and the college you plan to attend. If you're not sure about your major or the school you plan to attend, let the interviewer(s) know the areas you're interested in as well as why you applied to a particular college. Don't be afraid to have notes with you and to use them. Finally, be sure to have one or two questions in mind that you might ask the interviewer.

The Do's:

- Be punctual!! Get directions to the interview location before leaving your home. Check in when you arrive. If it is a virtual interview, make sure that your backdrop is professional and clean, and that you are in a quiet area. A helpful tip is to use headphones with a microphone to make it easier for you and the interviewers to hear each other!
- Dress appropriately as if applying for a job, which means neither too casual nor too dressy – this goes for virtual interviews too!
- When you meet the interviewer(s), introduce yourself, make eye contact and be professional.
- Listen to the interview questions carefully; think about what you'll say before replying.
- Be brief and honest with your answers.
- Maintain eye contact with the interviewer(s).
- Demonstrate interest and confidence – SHOW why you want this scholarship, and demonstrate why you deserve it!
- Have one or two relevant questions ready to ask the interviewer(s).



- Thank the interviewer(s) for his/her time and consideration. If possible, send a thank you note after the interview.
- Remember to SMILE!! Don't be shy! The interviewers want you to succeed.
- Practice interviewing with a friend, parent, teacher, or counselor.

The Don'ts:

- Assume the interviewer(s) are knowledgeable about you and your background – regardless of what you've included in your application.
- Be negative or critical about teachers, school, or friends.
- Give long answers that avoid the actual question.
- Don't be afraid to say "I don't know", but be prepared to provide a solution as to how you will find out.
- Expect the interviewer(s) to make a decision on the day of the interview – be patient! You are not the only applicant.
- Use political, racial, ethnic, religious or other insensitive statements.
- Chew gum, bite nails, yawn, stretch, or slouch.

Questions you may be asked:

- Be prepared to discuss your college choice, career goals and any other information you included in your application.
- Information on your background.
- Your academic achievements and why you should receive the scholarship.
- Personal matters such as finances, future plans, and things you are interested in.
- Your personal value structure, which may include the things you think are important in your life.
- Tough experiences that required you to problem solve or think creatively.

Tips & Tricks Summarized from: <https://www.evangel.edu/scholarship-interview-preparation-tips/>