Ten Tips for a Great College Interview

1. Why interview?
   • For you and for the college.
   • A chance to show you’re more than just statistics.
   • When it’s highly recommended or required.

2. Role of the interview
   • One of many factors, but not the most important.
   • Informational at some colleges; evaluative at others.

3. What are admission officers looking for?
   • Enthusiasm, motivation, intellectual promise, integrity, independence, leadership, personality, creativity, confidence, perseverance.
   • More than statistics – who you really are.

4. Talking about your school
   • Putting you in the context of your school community.
   • A chance to explain any holes or problems in your transcript, especially extenuating personal circumstances (illness, death in the family, divorce)

5. Talking about your extracurricular involvements
   • Be prepared to list the organizations in which you participate.
   • What has been the most important to you? What might you continue in college?
   • Have you risen to any leadership positions?
   • Be sure to talk about activities outside of school too, including religious activities or a part-time job.

6. Know yourself
   • Why do you want to go to college?
   • Why do you want to go to X College?
   • How did X College get on your list? Why is it a good match?
   • This is a chance for you to do a little self-promotion.
7. Be prepared
   • Call ahead; make an appointment.
   • Leave plenty of time for the interview and the visit.
   • Come early to fill out forms.
   • Don’t bluff your way through answers. It’s okay to say “I don’t know.”
   • Listen carefully and answer the question you’re asked.
   • Avoid yes and no answers. This is a conversation, not a test.
   • Be yourself, but don’t share too much, especially personal issues.

8. Do your homework
   • Read the literature or consult the Web site before you visit.
   • Ask questions. This is where you might be spending four years of your life.
     Questions also show you are truly interested.

9. Use common sense
   • Dress appropriately.
   • Be on time.
   • Don’t complain about your family or your teachers.
   • Write a thank-you note when you return home.

10. Relax
    • There’s really no such thing as “failing” an interview.
    • Admission officers will like you. We want to make you comfortable.
    • Be confident and assertive; you have plenty to recommend you!

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