

# Sen's Online Interview Technique Cribs

Interviews can be a scary experience. When you're under pressure, you're very likely to make small goofy mistakes you otherwise wouldn't, at the detriment of carrying yourself professionally. Of course, you should not try to be someone you are not in an interview, but the aim instead is to present your best aspects most evidently.

This Crib sheet will help you remember a few key points, to help you present yourself in the best light possible. I would recommend you start practising this sooner than later, in mock interviews that you will do in forthcoming days.

With this Crib-sheet and plenty of mock interview practice, your final interview performance should be stellar!

Good luck and prepare wisely.

## 1. Introduction

First impressions are everything. Fact. It is argued that someone makes \_\_ of their ideation of you from first impressions. So, when beginning with an interview, keep these tips in mind:

- Say hello and good morning/afternoon
- Introduce yourself by saying your first name
- Optional: mention how it's nice to meet them
- Smile.
- Answer concisely and politely to any opening questions they ask such as how you are or how your day has been

## 2. Speech and Intonation

It is very easy to begin droning on endlessly so be careful. Nothing is more disengaging than someone who waffles on and on, emotionlessly at the same tone. Remember a lot of what you say comes from the way you express what you're saying, as opposed to the words you are saying themselves.

So, let's change this up:

- Ensure you are articulating well and not mumbling when under pressure
- Slow your pace of speech down generally (if you tend to speak fast)
- Vary your tone from enthusiastic to melancholy, depending on the topic you are discussing, to add colour to what you're saying
- Example: if asked about what motivates you, you might want to sound a little more energetic, upbeat and on your toes
- Example: if asked about a sad encounter you've had with a patient, slow your voice down, be gentler and softer with your tone to express the emotion of sadness

### 3. Outfits for Online Interviews

Despite most interviews being online this year, as future doctors it's still important to look professional. Even though you're at home, still make an effort to do well. A suit might be overkill for a Zoom interview, but here are some suggestions for what sort of tops would be suitable (since this is what will be visible in video calls):

For gentlemen:

- Well ironed shirt and tie
- Well ironed shirt with the top button open
- A shirt with a round neck/V-neck sweater over the top
- Avoid: hoodies, t-shirts, tops with artwork/substantial logos

For ladies:

- A blouse with a high neckline
- A nicely ironed shirt
- A formal dress
- Avoid: hoodies, t-shirts, tops with artwork/substantial logos

Remember to wear something with presents you decently. Careful with your choice of bottoms, since if you are in a situation of needing to grab some paper during the interview, your tracksuit bottoms/PJ shorts will be given away! Also remember, dress-code for medical interviews is about what makes you look professional but still ensures your comfort.

### 4. Environment

Interviews are stressful for both the interviewers and interviewees. You both are concentrating and would prefer some peace and quiet. So, ideally:

- Arrange a quiet spot in the house, where you are unlikely to be disturbed
- Ensure said spot has good Wi-Fi
- Tell family clearly about your interview, so noise is kept minimal
- Close all windows to reduce outside disturbances
- Turn on lights and ensure your face is well-lit
- If needed, wear headphones to improve the quality of your microphone/speakers

### 5. Non-Verbal Communication

A lot of what you are communicating, which in interviews is your interview answer alongside your self-presentation, comes from your movement and actions. It still applies to online interviews, albeit a little less. So, here are a few things to avoid from day one:

- Fiddling around with pens/rubbers on your desk
- Spinning around on your chair whilst answering
- Slouching in your chair (something we all are guilty of)
- Playing with your hair/face
- Looking around the room aimlessly when waiting to be asked a question

All of these things can make you look that little less professional. Remember, marginal gains are everything and all the small efforts you put in to presenting yourself well, will add up!

## 6. Silence

A little silence goes a very long way in a conversation. Sometimes a taking a few moments before answering a question or even pausing before speaking is all you need. It helps you think a little more about what is asked, break it down and then precisely answer it using your knowledge and experiences.

I like to think interviews as being similar to playing tennis. You never stand right next to the net and whack the ball back. By staying a bit further back, you can read where the ball is coming from, where it's going to and letting it bounce before hitting allows for a controlled return shot.

Same with interviews – by taking your time, pausing a little and making the most of a few moments of silence, you can return interviewers a few kick-ass answers!

To conclude, here's a nice phrase I tell mentees that'll practically guarantee your success at interview:

*“interviewers most often are thinking about their dinner, so the more engaged you are, the more likely they are ”*