

Ten Pointers to Help You Pass the Board Interview

Being invited to the interview is a good sign. The interview is the board's opportunity to meet you and ask specific questions about your application. The style of the interview can range from an informal gathering of board members in an apartment to a formal interview with board members lined up at a table with you in the hot seat.

Dress-up and be prompt. In terms of dress and promptness only a board interview should be treated no differently than a professional job interview.

Prepare for a lack of privacy. The board has great latitude in the kinds of questions it can ask, be prepared for this and do not avoid answers to personal questions, or be angered by this intrusion.

Know your application. You should be able to quickly, and concisely answer any questions asked regarding your application, preferably without having to look at your application. However, if necessary, bring a copy along.

Unlike a job interview, do not try to sell yourself. Only answer questions asked and let the board run the show. Boards rarely turn down applications for being too boring.

Never volunteer information or engage in unsolicited conversations except for the basic cordial remarks and greetings.

Do not ask questions. Questions can often unintentionally convey negative information to the board. For example: "Do you have any plans to renovate the lobby?", is the kind of seemingly innocent question likely to offend the board member who was in charge of the last lobby renovation.

A short interview is better than a long one. While there are no hard and fast rules, a short cordial interview with a few board questions and remarks is often the best co-op board interview.

Couples should decide in advance who will answer what types of questions. For example, you may agree to answer all financial questions and your spouse will answer all other questions. Avoid discussing answers to questions with your spouse in front of the board.

Do not expect an answer at the end of the meeting. Most boards do not give their decision until a day or two after the meeting. I will take the necessary steps to determine if you have been approved.

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