

SLP Clinical Site Interview Tips

Before the Interview:

- Know the interviewer's name!!!
- **Research the company:** Know something about the business itself. Is it a school? A hospital? Skilled nursing? How many patients does the organization serve? What are the hours of operation? The company's website, social media posts, and news releases will provide information on the company, its goals, and its vision.
- **Pre-plan your interview attire:** You want to look professional—which can look differently at different places. In general, you want to look polished and put together! Business formal or business casual are the ideal choices. You should consider a suit, dress pants, a skirt, button-down shirts/blouses, and jackets are always safe choices. (The scrubs will come later!) A good rule of thumb for interviews is to always dress as if you're applying for one position above the one for which you are currently interviewing.
- **Rehearse your answers prior to the interview:** Pre-plan your elevator speech! Who are you professionally? Why do you want to work here? Why are you called to be an SLP? An example of your speech might be: "Hi, I'm Eliza Smith. I am studying to be a speech-language pathologist because I love helping others communicate. Although I'm still in graduate school, I have already found that I have a passion for language disorders, specifically dyslexia and its relationship to phonological awareness in early childhood. I want to do my clinical hours here because . . ."

At/During the Interview:

- Do not be late! Pre-plan your route and travel time to ensure you will arrive at least 15 minutes early.
- *Greet people!* Do not underestimate the power of making eye contact, smiling, and introducing yourself to people—from the receptionist to the interviewer.
- Have a pen, notebook, and reference sheet.

Sample Questions from the Supervisor:

- *Tell me about yourself.* State your professional background, show some interests/skills related to your career, and end with, "Is there anything else you would like to know?" This is your pre-practiced elevator speech!
- *What is your greatest strength?* Give an example of this professionally.
- *What is your greatest weakness?* Avoid the "perfectionist answer." It is *okay* to say something that is challenging for you. The key here is to talk about how you're addressing it. For example, if you're interviewing at an in-patient hospital setting, your answer might be something like, "I haven't had the opportunity to work with tracheotomy patients yet, and I am a little nervous about that. However, I am currently enrolled in craniofacial anatomy, and I have completed seven simulations on working with this type of patient. I'm continuing to build my knowledge base and confidence in this area."
- *Tell me about a time you failed at something.* Again, it is *okay* to talk about your failures—we all have them. The key here is to end on a positive note: What did you learn? What will you do differently in the future?

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Sample Questions to Ask in an Interview:

- Avoid saying, “I don’t have any questions.” Everyone has questions!
- What would a typical day entail for me?
- What are your expectations for speech-clinical interns?
- What qualities are you looking for in a speech-clinical intern?
- What is the most challenging part of this position?
- Approximately how many patients will I see per day?
- What will the opportunities be for me to expand my knowledge base in (insert area of interest)?
- Is there anything else you feel I should know?

Sample Questions to Ask in an Interview:

- Although a thank-you email is considered by some to be appropriate, a handwritten thank-you note is more memorable. Regardless of the media you choose, thank the interviewer in some manner.
- If you do not hear back within the expected time frame, make a follow-up call or email.

