

# Graduate School Interview Prep: Take-Home Guide

## Top 5 Keys to Success in Your Graduate School Interview

### 1. Be Prepared

- Research the program thoroughly. Know the faculty, mission, and curriculum.
- Practice common interview questions (see below).
- Bring copies of your resume, transcripts, and portfolio (if applicable).

### 2. Know Your Story

- Be ready to explain why you want to attend graduate school and how your background supports your goals.
- Highlight experiences that showcase your skills, leadership, and passion for your field.

### 3. Communicate Confidently

- Speak clearly, maintain eye contact, and use professional language.
- Structure your responses using the STAR method:  
Situation → Task → Action → Result.

### 4. Ask Thoughtful Questions

- Prepare 2-3 questions to show your interest in the program (e.g., *What opportunities are available for research or internships?*).

### 5. Reflect Your Best Self

- Dress professionally and arrive early.
- Stay positive and composed, even if faced with challenging questions.

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## Sample Graduate School Interview Questions

*Practice these and tailor your answers to your unique experiences:*

1. **Tell me about yourself.**
2. **Why do you want to pursue this program?**
3. **What are your career goals, and how will this program help you achieve them?**
4. **Describe a challenge you've faced and how you overcame it.**
5. **What is your greatest strength, and how does it make you a good candidate?**
6. **How do you plan to contribute to our program/community?**
7. **What questions do you have for us?**

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## Your Elevator Pitch (30 Seconds)

*Practice introducing yourself with confidence and clarity:*

1. Who you are (your name, background, and relevant experience).
2. Why you're passionate about your field of study.
3. How the program aligns with your career goals.

**Example:**

"I'm [Your Name], a psychology graduate with a strong passion for clinical mental health. My experience working in crisis intervention sparked my interest in advanced training, which aligns with [Program Name]'s focus on evidence-based care. I'm excited to further develop my skills to support underserved communities."

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## Body Language Checklist

- Sit up straight and lean slightly forward to show engagement.
  - Keep your hands visible (avoid crossing arms).
  - Smile and nod occasionally to show attentiveness.
  - Maintain consistent eye contact without staring.
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## Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Speaking too fast or giving overly long responses.
  - Failing to research the program or prepare questions.
  - Overusing filler words like "um" or "like."
  - Undervaluing your experiences or being overly modest.
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## Quick Tips for Prepping

1. Practice your answers in front of a mirror or record yourself.
  2. Do mock interviews with a friend, professor, or career counselor.
  3. Review the program website and align your responses with their values.
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## Final Reminder: Believe in Yourself