SUMMIT INTERVIEW ACADEMY

Medicine interviews: a practical quick guide

Prepare clear, thoughtful answers that sound like you. A free two-page guide for medical school applicants.

1 / Build a convincing “Why medicine?” answer

Use three parts: **motivation** → **evidence** → **reflection.** Explain what attracts you to medicine, support it with a specific experience, then explain what you learned. Aim to show an informed interest in the work, including its challenges.

A useful starting point: “I’m drawn to combining scientific reasoning with patient care. During [your real experience], I noticed [specific observation]. This helped me understand [what changed in your thinking].” Use this as a structure, not a script.

Make it stronger: name the part of medicine that interests you and explain why. Recognise uncertainty, responsibility and teamwork. Avoid implying that only doctors help people or make clinical decisions; show respect for other healthcare roles.

2 / Turn work experience into evidence

A placement list tells the interviewer where you went. Reflection shows what you learned. Use **observation** → **meaning** → **application.** Choose one interaction, explain why it mattered and describe how it will influence your behaviour.

Example: “I observed a clinician pause when a patient seemed confused and explain the plan in simpler language. I learned that giving information is different from checking understanding. In my volunteering, I now check whether my explanation was clear.” Only use experiences that are true for you.

Look beyond dramatic cases: listening, handing over information, acknowledging a mistake and supporting a colleague can all provide useful insights. Describe observations honestly and keep patients anonymous.

3 / Give personal examples with a clear structure

For teamwork, communication, resilience or mistakes, use **STAR + reflection:** briefly set the **situation** and **task**; spend most time on your **actions**; explain the **result**; finish with what you **learned** and would change.

Show your contribution: say what you did, why you chose it and how others responded. A modest example with honest learning is stronger than a grand story with little detail. For a weakness, describe a real limitation and the steps you are taking to improve it.

Quick check: Have I answered this question? Is my example specific? Have I explained my learning? Stop once your main point is clear.

Think clearly. Practise purposefully.

4 / Approach ethical scenarios step by step

Clarify before deciding. Identify missing facts, who is affected and whether there is an immediate safety concern. Consider different perspectives and explain your reasoning rather than jumping to a confident verdict.

Use the four principles as prompts: autonomy (respecting informed choices), beneficence (promoting wellbeing), non-maleficence (avoiding harm) and justice (fairness). Explain which matter in the scenario and where they may conflict; simply listing them is not enough.

Finish with a proportionate next step: communicate respectfully, stay within your role and seek appropriate supervision. You do not need to pretend to know an unfamiliar legal rule or clinical detail. Acknowledge uncertainty and explain what you would clarify.

5 / Discuss healthcare topics with balance

Choose a small number of topics you can explain well. For each, prepare: **what the issue is** → **why it matters** → **benefits and difficulties** → **your reasoned view.** Consider patients, staff, access and resources. Separate facts from your opinion.

For example, with AI: discuss a specific use such as supporting image interpretation, then consider potential benefits alongside accuracy, bias, privacy and human oversight. Avoid claims that technology will solve every problem. Check current facts using reliable sources before the interview.

6 / A simple seven-day preparation plan

Days 1–2: review each university's published interview format and instructions. Build six short experience notes covering motivation, teamwork, communication, resilience, a mistake and work experience. Record learning, not complete speeches.

Days 3–4: practise answers aloud and record yourself. Listen for a clear opening, a specific example and reflection. Repeat the topic with a differently worded question so you learn to adapt.

Days 5–6: practise ethical and healthcare discussions with someone who will ask follow-up questions. Ask for one strength and one concrete improvement. Use the feedback in your next attempt.

Day 7: do a short timed practice matching the university's format. Check travel or online setup, then prioritise rest. During the interview, pause, listen carefully and ask for clarification if needed.

Five habits to take into the interview

Answer the question asked. Avoid forcing in a rehearsed story.
Be specific. One clear example is often enough.
Reflect. Explain how an experience changed your understanding.
Be honest. Do not invent experiences or overstate your role.
Stay conversational. Use talking points rather than memorised paragraphs.

Want more guided practice? Explore our video bank and personalised mock interviews at summitinterviewacademy.com.