



Approach to MMI Prep

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The MMI is an interview format that is being adopted by professional schools across the world. It is designed to measure competencies including oral communication, social/non verbal skills, team work skills, and assess a future healthcare practitioner's ability to interact with patients. The MMI is composed of multiple stations, each approximately 10 minutes in length, where the applicant is asked to talk about a prompt, or act in a hypothetical scenario that addresses the aforementioned competencies. The MMI prompts are very similar to the CaSPER exam, and thus the approach described below will follow a similar format to my previous article on developing an approach to CaSPER.

Overall, there are two types of prompts that may come up - personal prompts, and situation-based prompts. Personal prompts ask you to reflect on your experiences and talk about what you have learned through this process. For example, personal prompts will ask you about a time that you showed strength, conflict-resolution techniques, etc. Situation-based prompts will ask you to imagine yourself in a specific circumstance and the questions will ask you to describe your thought process. Lastly, there may be acting stations where you will be asked to show your understanding of the previous prompts. You may be asked to comfort a friend, deliver bad news, confront authoritative figure, etc.

As always, these are not specific instructions on doing well on the exam, and are not thoroughly researched evidence-based approaches. Rather, they reflect my opinion as an individual and what I found helpful. There are millions of ways to succeed on the MMI, and there is no secret sauce - this article provides pointers to developing a good approach.



General advice

1. **Have fun** - a positive attitude goes a long way. As well, take care of your physical and mental health during this stressful time! Lean on support networks as needed!
2. **Practise, practise, practise.** No one is born perfect, and that's okay! We all have a special journey that leads us to medicine, so it's important that we work on our weaknesses, and continue to hone our strengths.
3. **Time yourself when you answer, and record yourself.** Self-reflection is an important tool in assessing your answers. We tend to ramble under the pressure of time - remember to be clear, concise, and coherent. Professionalism matters! (Try to reduce "uhhs" and "ahhs")
4. **Ask your friends to listen to your responses** - their feedback is always helpful. Keep a list of the feedback, and work on it over time. Ask your friends direct questions to get good feedback - e.g. "Do you think I rambled during this section of my answer?" "Did you find my body language to be open and positive, or should I change anything?" etc.
5. **Try to set up a mock MMI with your study group.** Find 10 prompts online, and rotate through them. Give yourself 1 minute to read the prompt, and try to answer the prompt in 8 - 10 minutes.
6. **Account for test-day anxiety.** Personally, I ramble when I'm nervous, and I tend to fiddle with my hands. Ask your friends to look out for these.
7. **Read current news articles.** I found healthydebate.ca to be an excellent resource. Understand new updates in the medical and medico-legal world, as well as current politics in Canada.
8. **Practise, practise, practise.** I can't stress this enough - you should do as many scenarios as possible.

Approach to Personal Questions

1. **Try to have some stories/scenarios ready to go.** These stories should be variable and they should ideally reflect times when you have displayed your strengths, weaknesses, conflict resolutions techniques, teamwork, one of your mistakes, challenged authority, were challenged by an authoritative figure, etc.
2. **Take your time to calmly read the prompt, and develop an approach to your answer.** When we are nervous and pressed for time, we often ramble incoherently. Instead, take a deep breath, and think about what you want to say. Next, re-read the prompt to ensure you didn't miss anything. It's okay to spend an extra 30 seconds to collect your thoughts!
3. **Always format your answer - start off by introducing yourself, and repeating the prompt/instructions in your own words** to ensure that you're not answering the wrong questions! Next, let the interviewer know what you'd like to talk about in an organized manner.
4. **To format your answers, describe the situation in 1 or 2 minutes, and what you did in the next 1 or 2 minutes,** Lastly, end off the scenario with lessons learned. You don't have to relate the lessons specifically to medicine, however if they're relevant, draw a connection.



5. **If the interview is 10 minutes, try to answer in 6-8 minutes.** Leave some time near the end for the interviewer to ask you questions. If you missed important points, they'll usually probe you on it to help you get the extra points!
6. **Try to be genuine with your answers.** It's okay to show weaknesses, and it's okay to talk about failures. It makes you seem human and more candid in the eyes of a reviewer.
7. **Body language matters** - lean in gently, be passionate, be professional, and lastly try to have a fun time! My dad always told me - "you can't fake genuine!"

Approach to Situation-based Questions

1. **Take your time to calmly read the prompt and understand the major themes they are dwelling on.** Usually, they'll be asking you to compare two of the three tenets of medical ethics - beneficence (to help others), justice (to help society), and autonomy (allowing people to make decisions for themselves). Slow down, collect your thoughts outside the door, and re-read the prompt! You don't want to miss important information.
2. **As before, format your answers. Introduce yourself, repeat the prompt/instructions in your own words,** and let the interviewer know what you'd like to talk about.
3. **Initially list the two opposing views to show that you understand the crux of the dilemma.** Next take 2 or 3 minutes to convey the pros and cons for both sides to show that you have critically thought about the issue. Lastly, pick a side and try to defend it. You may use personal examples and stories, relevant current/old news, legal or medico legal arguments, or even just mention that it's your gut feeling. It's important to be honest here, try to pick a side that you truly believe in, rather than what you assume is the "medical school" answer - your argument should be passionate.
4. **If the interview is 10 minutes, try to answer in 6-8 minutes.** Leave some time near the end for the interviewer to ask you questions. If you missed important points, they'll usually probe you on it to help you get the extra points!
5. **As always, practise, be genuine, and watch your body language for professionalism!**

Approach to Acting Scenarios

1. **As always, read the prompt, formulate a plan for what you will see/do,** and re-read the prompt. Slow down, collect your thoughts, and have fun - acting is intimidating, and we all know that!
2. **No matter the case, the most important advice I got was listen more than you talk!** Acting scenarios may ask you to comfort a friend, confront an authoritative figure, or give bad news.
3. **I tend to organize my time into three parts.** During the first section, I try to understand their point of view. This is difficult - however, it's important that you let them talk. Ask them questions, probe further if needed. Be empathetic and respect boundaries. Body language is super important here! It's okay to take some extra time to comfort the person. Be encouraging and helpful! If you are giving bad news, ask them what they know so far, how they feel about it, their expectations, their fears, etc.



4. **In the second section, provide information that is relevant to you.** If you are giving bad news, be honest, direct, and use the right words! It's hard - but don't beat around the bush.
5. **In the last section, I ask them how they feel about my thoughts and respond to their concerns.** It's important to let them guide the first and the last sections of the conversation.
6. **In general, be professional, be courteous and watch your body language!** As well, have fun - I can't stress this enough, but it really shows in your interview if you're having a good time!

