



Overview of an MMI interview set up

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For all Med School applicants, the MMI seems like a daunting prospect. As a pre-med, I know that for me personally the prospect of interviews was extremely nerve-wracking especially as I didn't know what to expect. I hope this overview of the typical MMI format gives some clarity about what to expect if you are lucky enough to be invited for an interview. I will cover what a typical interview looked like before COVID 19, as I did not go through the COVID-19 interview cycle. Some schools moved the format of the MMI online using video chat, others moved to only using applications to make decision. It is difficult to predict what will happen during the interviews of 2021, but hopefully things will continue to get better!

Please note; all stations examples in this post are from my own imagination and therefore I did not break any confidentially forms I signed during my interview process.

Pre-Pandemic MMI

Pre-interview

- Upon arrival to the MMI, interviewees are greeted and asked to register at a desk. Here you will be given your nametag as well as your interview number.
- Before entering the interview, you will be asked to hand over all your personal belongings. At most schools you can bring nothing into the interview (there may be exceptions for medications, but I am not sure). Usually they are put in bags and labelled with your name.
- Most schools will provide water stations before the interview and may have water at the “break stations” which I will talk more about later.
- Some schools run an interview in the morning, and one in the afternoon. Other schools run one session for the day depending on how much time they set aside for interviews. Each individual school will give you an idea of what time your family/friends should come back to get you if someone is with you. They should prepare for you to be tied up for a minimum of 3-4 hours.
- Most schools have an orientation before the interview where the format of the interview is discussed in detail, you are divided into your groups and you are asked to sign a confidentiality form. This form states that you will not disclose the specific questions/prompts used in the interview as many schools share/re-use questions.



During the interview

- MMI's run in a circuit format, meaning each interviewee starts at a station labelled number 1-10 (or however many stations that school chooses to use).
- Most stations consist of a prompt hung outside of a small room (usually an exam room in the university's clinical learning centre or hospital) with an evaluator inside the room.
- Usually 2 minutes of time are given for you to move from one station to the next and to read the prompt (don't worry the rooms are usually very close together). Some schools will give you paper and a pencil to jot down ideas, others will not.
- After 2 minutes have passed, a signal or bell will ring telling you that you can enter the interview room. Do not worry, a copy of the prompt will also be in the exam room if you need help remembering the specifics of it.
- After entering the room you will give the evaluator your interview number sticker or give them your number orally depending on the school.
- As soon as you enter the room, you can begin answering the question on the prompt or doing the activity required. You do not have to start right away if you want to collect your thoughts, but you will not get any extra time.
- Usually a bell will ring to signal 30 seconds or 1 minute left at the station.
- When the bell rings a second time, leave the room and move to the next station.

Types of stations

1. Typical station- the prompt will be a question that you are asked to answer. Typically questions focus on ethical principles (example- should parents always have a right to make medical decisions for their child?) and topical medical issues (Province X has had success with harm reduction sites in preventing drug overdose deaths, what are some barriers to implementing this in Saskatchewan) but there could also be questions tied to the CanMed roles (definitely look these up before your interview!)
2. Personal station- personal stations as the name implies ask person questions about your experiences. Some examples might be "what experiences have you had that make you a good candidate?" Sometimes questions are more "out of the box", for example "what is your favourite song and why do you connect with it?"
3. Instruction station- these stations aren't all that common but still are seen at some schools. In this station you will be asked to instruct either a fellow interviewee or an actor on how to do a specific task. Often you can't see what the other person is doing. Examples could be having someone replicate a geometric design or fold a paper airplane.
4. Acting station- again these stations are not that common but are possible. In these stations you will be asked to interact with an actor while being observed by the evaluator. It could require you to comfort someone having a difficult time, or have you try to convince someone of your viewpoint. In these stations, actors may be given specific instructions to try and rile you up (for example in one of my stations where I was instructed to argue in favor of something, the actor told me that my opinion was "unCanadian").



5. Writing stations- I only saw one of these during my 3 MMI interviews but it was very stressful. In this station you read the prompt and are then given 8 minutes to write a paragraph as a response.
6. Rest stations- in these stations you get a break! You can use the bathroom, drink some water or chat to the people bringing you around the interview. When I'm nervous I like to chat, so I made small talk but it's totally ok to just be quiet if you would rather have a moment to yourself.

Post interview

- Most schools will have a presentation after the MMI where you will be given speeches by the faculty and possibly by current students as well.
- At all the MMI's I've been to we've been given lunch! I think that sometimes there is an option to include information about dietary restrictions but I can't completely remember.
- Most schools will also include a tour; at some schools this is mandatory while at others it is not. Usually at this point, you can have your belongings back and reunite with anyone at the interview with you.

Interview tips

1. **Don't let one bad station rattle you.** I know this is harder than it seems, but the stations are completely independent and one bad station won't tank your whole score. Focus on doing your best on the rest of the stations.
2. **Take a pee break when they are offered;** there aren't that many and nothing is worse than sitting there and needing to go like crazy during your interview!
3. **Do your best to eat a good breakfast,** it's a long day and you aren't allowed snacks. I know this can be hard with nerves, but try your best.

I hope you all find this post helpful! If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to me!

