

Tips for interviewer

Prior to meeting: Interviewer should ask interviewee to choose and read 5 of their papers

Tips for interviewee

Take a breadth

If you get a question you want to think about more -

- Ask to come back to it later
- Ask a clarifying question - do you mean X or Y?

Be honest about your weaknesses - it can actually strengthen your interview

Don't use self-deprecating language

Molly and Chris's questions

1. Tell me about your research interests? For example, what questions would you like to address during graduate school?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. How well do you communicate science
 - ii. How well can you put your research into a broader context
 - iii. How well can you work with others (especially considering how collaborative research can be/considering the wide diversity of researchers in science)
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Make sure to talk about something that is reasonable (not out of scope)
 - ii.
 - iii.

2. Why me? What is it about my lab that interests you?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Breadth of understanding of what I do
 - ii. The interviewer is looking to see if you will be a good fit for them
 - iii. Sometimes limitations of research interests or equipment may hinder a successful relationship. Alternatively, a student can show that they have the ability and want to collaborate to complete the project

- iv. Essential to assessing mentor-mentee fit
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Ensure they are still excited about the aspects of their research you are interested in and what brought you to their lab for an interview

- 3. What role do you hope I will play and what do you hope I can offer you as a graduate student?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE

- 4. Can you tell me about a time when you were able to be creative with your research?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Look for evidence of problem solving or new ways of putting information together
 - ii. Examples
 - 1. Art
 - 2. Putting ideas together
 - 3. How they solved a problem
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Take a breadth, this answer can be answered in many ways!

- 5. Q: If you did not pursue graduate school/postdoc, what career path would you choose?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Trying to gauge level of enthusiasm for academic research vs. something else
 - ii. Look for: are they sure grad school is necessary for them?
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Even a non-academic answer can come across as academic
 - ii. Answer honestly, but also explain why academia would be a good fit for you
 - iii. Here's an idea, but I would keep trying even if I'm not accepted because this is what I want to do

- 6. Q: What is one major objective you hope to achieve as a postdoc/graduate student?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Look for what they are interested in, do they want to get better at something? Build a particular skillset? Answer a specific question?

- b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. It is ok to identify a weakness, but it might also be good to suggest how you'll address the weakness.
- 7. Q: Provide a hypothetical example of a research question and ask how they might approach a research project that would address that question?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Better phrasing: If you could test anything, what would you do?
 - ii. OR: What original questions do you want to ask?
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE

- 8. Q: What experience do you have that makes you think you are ready to tackle graduate school ?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Talk about a research question, how you tackled it, and bring it back to the question
 - ii. If you took initiative, talk about that too!

- 9. Q: Can you give an example of how you might plan out a project so you can meet a deadline?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Could ask something broader like the original question: "Have you ever had to plan for a long-term objective, something that took over a year? How did or would you plan to meet a long-term goal? What do you think is most important about long-term planning?"
 - ii. Specify that it doesn't have to be scientific (eagle scouts, thesis, musical goal, etc.)
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE

- 10. Q: What is science? Can you give me an example of how you've applied science in your life or in school? What made that experience different from other ways of learning?
 - a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE
 - i. Wants to know how you think, what is science to them?
 - ii. What excites you about science? What lights your fire about research path?
 - iii. Want to assess potential of person, but this may not be best approach to get that answer.
 - iv. Better to ask about what excites them about science
 - b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE
 - i.

11. Q: What do you think the greatest challenges are to people pursuing research careers?

a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE

i. Say what Lauren said

b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE

i. Say what Lauren said -- "Limited time and budget to answer all the interesting questions but also devote time to family relationships"

12. Q: Can you tell me about a time when you were a teacher or a mentor? What qualities about your students/mentees did you most appreciate?

a. INTERVIEWER PERSPECTIVE

b. INTERVIEWEE PERSPECTIVE

Katie's questions

RESEARCH INTERESTS

1. Tell me about yourself, how'd you end up and grad school ask questions about research.
 1. Can you give some examples of how you made original intellectual contributions to this project or others?
2. Let's say you had all the money in the world, if you could test any question for your PhD/postdoc, what would you test?
 1. (this trips up everyone)
3. Why do you think my lab is a good fit for you?
 1. Which 5 of my papers did you select to read? Which did you like the most?

HOW DO YOU WORK

1. **What would you say are your strengths?**
2. **What would you say are your weaknesses?**
3. **Meeting deadlines is an important part of being a good scientist. Can you give me some examples of how you plan out a project so you can meet the deadline?**
4. **In grad school you have to balance teaching, lab, field, etc. How do you stay organized?**
 1. When you find out about an event, do you add it to your calendar right away?
5. If you're having difficulty of having a particular problem, walk me through the process of how you approach a problem that you're having difficulty solving
 1. give me an example (and check if their example matches the process they describe)
 2. Can you give me an example of a time that you needed outside expertise with a problem, and how you found that expertise?
6. Can you give me an example of how you had to be a leader and some of the decisions you had to make?
7. In science, we experience far more criticism than complements. Give an example of a time you were criticized, and how you responded?

SKILLS

1. **Do you keep a lab notebook? How often do you write in it and what kind of information do you think is important to keep in a notebook?**
2. **Writing is an important part of research. How do you approach starting writing a manuscript?**
 1. **Can you give some examples of how you structure your time and motivate yourself to write?**
3. **CODING - If yes, How do you document your code and make it reproducible?**
 1. **Do use version control?**
 2. **Have you ever worked on collaborative coding projects?**
4. Teaching and mentoring undergraduates is also an important part of graduate research. Can you give me some examples of issues or frustrations you've encountered dealing with assistants and how you've handled them.
5. I see from your CV that you've given some professional/scientific presentations. What do you think makes a good presentation?
 1. Tell me about some of the audiences that you've presented in front of.
6. Molecular lab skills

1. Pipetting
2. Calculating molarity
7. Collaborations and communication are also important. Have you ever dealt with a situation where people have miscommunicated with each other and how did you deal with it?