

Visa Interview Advice

Ties to your home country

Under U.S. law, all applicants for nonimmigrant visas, such as student visas, are viewed as intending immigrants until they can convince the consular officer that they are not. You must therefore be able to show that you have reasons for returning to your home country that are stronger than those for remaining in the United States.

English

Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language.

Speak for Yourself

Do not bring parents or family members with you to the interview.

Know the Program and How It Fits Your Career Plans

If you are not able to articulate the reasons you will study in a particular program in the United States, you may not succeed in convincing the consular officer that you are indeed planning to study, rather than to immigrate.

Be Brief

Because of the volume of applications received, all consular officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview.

Additional Documentation

It should be immediately clear to the consular officer what written documents you are presenting and what they signify.

Not All Countries are Equal

Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the United States as immigrants will have more difficulty getting visas.

Employment

Your main purpose in coming to the United States should be to study, not for the chance to work before or after graduation.

Dependents Remaining at Home

If your spouse and children are remaining behind in your country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence.

Maintain a Positive Attitude

Do not engage the consular officer in an argument. If you are denied a student visa, ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring in order to overcome the refusal, and try to get the reason you were denied in writing.