

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 is 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 fail in convincing the consular officer that you are indeed planning to learn, 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 apparent 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 primary 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 remain 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. For example, if you are denied a student visa, ask the officer for a list of documents they would suggest you bring to overcome the refusal and try to get why you were denied in writing.