

MULTIPLE MINI INTERVIEWS

Demystifying the MMI

WHAT IS AN MMI?

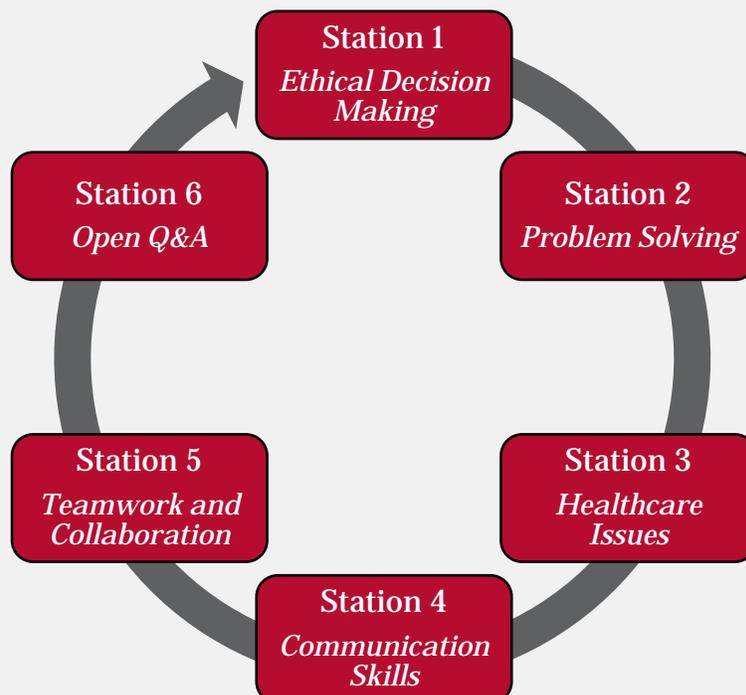
In contrast to the traditional one-on-one interview, the multiple mini interview (or MMI) is an interviewing technique that requires an applicant to complete several “mini-interviews” in short succession. First introduced in Canada in 2004, the MMI is quickly becoming a part of the admissions process at various graduate and professional programs across the US—including those in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine. Indeed, high profile programs such as Duke University, New York University, Stanford University, and the University of Texas have implemented MMIs into their admissions process.

WHY ARE PROGRAMS USING MMI?

Traditional interviews have been found to be poor predictors of future job performance; whereas MMIs have been found to: 1) Reduce the presence of bias among interviewers and 2) Assess non-cognitive skills and character traits that are important for careers in healthcare. MMIs also provide multiple opportunities for an applicant to impress their evaluators, rather than hoping to connect with a single individual, and to redeem earlier missteps.

WHAT DOES AN MMI LOOK LIKE?

Typical MMIs involve rotating through a series of stations (often 6-10). At each station, applicants are presented with a hypothetical scenario or question prompt, to which they are provided 2 minutes to plan their answer and then 6-8 minutes to discuss their answer with the evaluator. The scenarios do not test or assess scientific knowledge but instead focus on issues such as communication, ethics, critical thinking, teamwork and opinions on health care issues.



HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR AN MMI?

Much of the appeal of the MMI is that it purportedly measures character over preparation—in other words, graduate healthcare programs hope to gain a glimpse of you as an individual and not as a well-rehearsed interviewing machine. That said, there are a few key things to consider in order to be successful during an MMI:

1. Research the institutions in which you have been invited to interview to determine their basic interview structure: What is the number of stations? What time-limits are imposed? What types of content or qualities are they hoping to assess? Most programs will have these details available on their website.
2. Realize that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers in an MMI scenario. Instead, interviewers are challenging you to think on your feet, organize your thoughts quickly, plan for time limits appropriately, and cope with anxiety. Drawing on personal experiences can also be helpful, but should not replace logical thinking that addresses the question asked.
3. Understand that practice is essential when it comes to interviewing. University Career Services (UCS) serves as an excellent resource for developing your interview skills. At UCS, you can schedule a mock interview to work on conveying ideas verbally in a short amount of time and to help identify any nervous habits.

STEPS FOR APPROACHING AN MMI SCENARIO:

1. Gather the facts (What is the story? What more would you like to know?)
2. Define the ethical issues
3. Identify the affected parties (Who are the stakeholders?)
4. Identify the consequences (Any risks? Is there the potential for harm?)
5. Brainstorm potential actions (What are the pro’s and con’s?)
6. Decide on a course of action and be prepared for opposing arguments

EXAMPLE SCENARIOS:

EXAMPLE 1: Dr. Cheung recommends homeopathic medicines to his patients. There is no scientific evidence or widely accepted theory to suggest that homeopathic medicines work, and Dr. Cheung does not believe in them. He recommends homeopathic medicines to people with mild and non-specific symptoms, such as fatigue, headaches and muscle aches, because he believes that it will do no harm but will give them reassurance.

Consider the ethical problems that Dr. Cheung's behavior might pose. Discuss these issues with the interviewer.

EXAMPLE 2: Due to the shortage of physicians in rural communities, it has been suggested that medical programs preferentially admit students who are willing to commit to a 2 or 3 year tenure of working in an under-served area upon graduation.

Consider the broad implications of this policy for health and health care costs. For example, do you think the approach will be effective? At what expense? Discuss this issue with the interviewer.