

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

UNDERSTANDING MYSELF
CV WRITING
PERSONAL STATEMENTS
COLLEGE INTERVIEWS





UNDERSTANDING MYSELF





MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- How would you rate you as an independent learner?
- **Red** – “I’m not really connected to my goals, utilising support or taking ownership
- **Yellow** – “I’m moderately connected to my goals, utilising support or taking ownership
- **Green** – “I’m definitely connected to my goals, utilising support or taking ownership
- Discuss your answer with your peer and decide on one step that can help you move forward.
- What’s one independent learning habit you’d like to build now that could help you in a job or apprenticeship one day?

Reflect and Respond:



1. What is a WIN from your week that you would like to highlight?

2. What is one personal strength you've noticed in how you work, and how might that help you in future education or career settings?

3. What's one practical step you could take next week to develop your independent learning and prepare for your future?

Common Mental Blockers for Students



START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. Out of the three blockers discussed – **fear of failure**, **overwhelm**, and **distractions** – which one is most likely to get in the way of your progress right now?
2. Why do you think learning how to handle mental blockers like fear and distraction is important not just for school, but also for future work or leadership roles?
3. What's one habit or mindset shift that could help you build resilience this week?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- What's one fear or blocker you've noticed affecting your motivation or focus recently?
- Can you think of achievement, event or even a specific lesson when you showed the qualities needed to overcome your blocker? Feel free to think of examples outside of school too.
- How might learning to manage that blocker help you become more confident or effective in your future goals or career?

Reflect and Respond:



1. Which blocker challenged you most this week, and what did you do (or could you do) to address it?

2. What is one strategy that helped, or could help, you stay focused on your goals?

3. How do you think building this kind of self-awareness and resilience could benefit you in a future job, apprenticeship, or your own business?

Time Management Hacks



Parkinson's Principle & Pomodoro Technique

START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. Which time management habit do you currently struggle with the most — procrastination, poor focus, or lack of planning?
2. The Parkinson Principle says tasks expand to fill the time we give them. How could this be holding you back in your studies currently?
3. What's one area of your life where you'd benefit from creating shorter, more focused working blocks?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- Have you tried using a Pomodoro-style timer or setting your own mini-deadlines this week? What did you notice?
- What time-wasting habits could you replace with more focused bursts of activity?
- How do you think developing time management skills now will help you in future environments like a job, university, or running your own projects?



END OF THE WEEK REFLECTION TASK

(Students complete this individually)



Reflect and Respond:

1. What time management strategy did you try this week, and how did it impact your focus or progress?

2. What's one new insight you've gained about yourself when managing time?

3. How could developing these time strategies now help you stand out as an independent, reliable person in your future studies or career?

Future Ready



Unlocking the Power of Active Recall

START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. Before watching this episode, what were your go-to revision techniques? How effective do you think they really are?
2. What's one way you could upgrade your revision habits this week using active recall?
 - ☐ Flash cards
 - ☐ Past papers & quizzes
 - ☐ Teaching others
 - ☐ Elaborative interrogation
3. What are your top 3 revision strategies?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- Which active recall strategy have you tried (*e.g. flashcards, self-testing, teaching others*)? How did it go?
- What's one way you could use active recall with a peer or small group to make learning more engaging?
- How could using active recall consistently now give you a competitive edge in future studies, interviews, or even a business you might start?



END OF THE WEEK REFLECTION TASK

(Students complete this individually)



Reflect and Respond:

1. What is one active recall strategy that worked well for you this week?

2. How do you plan to include this approach in your future revision routines?

3. Imagine a future role or opportunity you're aiming for. How might strong recall and communication skills help you succeed in that space?

Know the Syllabus



Learning with First Principles Thinking

START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. Why do you think understanding your syllabus is important – not just for exams, but for **how** you learn and prepare overall?
2. How might breaking complex topics down into their simplest parts help you become a better problem solver?
3. What's one subject or area you're studying where knowing the syllabus better could help you feel more in control?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- Have you ever found yourself studying things that weren't actually needed for your exam or course? What did you learn from that?
- How might these habits (clarifying your focus, asking better questions) help you stand out in your future education or career?
- What subject needs urgent attention and how can you collaborate with a teacher to address this?



END OF THE WEEK REFLECTION TASK

(Students complete this individually)



Reflect and Respond:

1. How has your understanding of your syllabus changed this week?

2. What's one way you've simplified your learning by focusing on what really matters?

3. In your own words, how could using first principles thinking help you stay focused and strategic in your future goals - whether academic, entrepreneurial, or career-based?

From Cramming to Calm:



Soar with Spaced repetition

START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. The learning curve shows that progress can feel slow at first. Can you think of a time when something felt hard to learn at first but got easier over time?
2. Why do you think learning to take action — even when you don't feel like it — is an important skill in the working world or as an entrepreneur?
3. The word “decision” means to cut off other options. What's one decision you could make today that would move you closer to your goals?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- What small step have you taken this week to beat procrastination?
- How did breaking a big task down into smaller steps help you get started (or how might it)?
- Starting early with revision means you don't have to cram when it counts, what can get in the way of you implementing a well paced revision routine?



END OF THE WEEK REFLECTION TASK



(Students complete this individually)

Reflect and Respond:

1. What caused you to procrastinate this week, and how did you respond?

2. What is one technique (*e.g. small starts, celebrating progress, setting deadlines*) that helped you or could help you take action?

3. How do you think learning to manage procrastination now will help you become more consistent and confident in your future work, study, or business life?

Level Up with Feedback Loops



START OF THE WEEK: Group Coaching Questions

(Discuss these after watching the video)

1. Why do you think feedback is important – not just in school, but in the working world too?
2. Think about a time when feedback helped you improve something – what changed as a result?
3. What might get in the way of a student actively asking for feedback?



MIDWEEK PEER COACHING QUESTIONS



(Students coach one another using these)

- What's one piece of feedback you've received this term that you're still working on?
- How do you usually respond to feedback, and how could you shift your mindset to see it as a growth opportunity?
- What's one area you could ask a teacher, mentor, or peer to get specific feedback this week?



END OF THE WEEK REFLECTION TASK

(Students complete this individually)



Reflect and Respond:

1. What feedback did you receive this week, and what did you do with it?

2. How has your mindset around feedback shifted during this module?

3. In your future career or education, how could using feedback loops help you stay adaptable, confident, and continually improving?

Understanding Myself

✓ Based on our discussions and learning, re-cap on your main points around self-awareness



My Strengths	My Areas for Development



PERSONAL STATEMENT



How to Write a Personal Statement



Your personal statement is a way of conveying your reasons for wanting to study at a particular college, do a type of course, and to also demonstrate your ability to complete the course successfully. The application process for college can be very competitive and a strong personal statement is crucial to ensure your chances of success.

There is no single, right way of writing a personal statement. However below are a few suggestions on what to include (you may want to use some or all of the points below to help structure your personal statement). Please note: Each college may provide its own guidelines on what to include in your personal statement (this might include a word or page limit, or specific content requirement), but please check with the college/s you are applying to.



Introduction

Here you could outline:

- Who are you and/or where are you currently studying
- What are you applying for (e.g. English literature, bricklaying, childcare)
- Your reasons for wanting to study your chosen subjects
- Your reasons for wanting to study at that particular college (e.g. what makes that college standout for you?)

You should demonstrate enthusiasm for your chosen subject/s, course type and college, and show that you have a good understanding of the subject area and college you are applying to. Failure to personalise your personal statement to a college and course could suggest you are not serious about your post 16 college choices.

How to Write a Personal Statement



Talk about your school subjects

- In this section you should discuss your strengths and key skills and relate them to what you are applying for. This will demonstrate that you are capable of accomplishing the course/s successfully.

Discuss any position of responsibility you may have had

- This might include being a Student Leader, Prefect, Peer Mentor etc.

Talk about work experience including non-GCSE activities in school

- This could include what you did do for your Year 10 work experience. Do you have a part-time job? Do you volunteer? What skills, knowledge, and experience have you developed from these experiences? How useful were these experiences? You could also include assisting at open evenings, taking part in drama productions, school fundraising events, projects, sports teams, meetings etc.

Talk about extra-curricular activities outside of school

- This could include any hobbies or interests (rock climbing, keeping fit, youth club etc.). You could also talk about any additional certificates/awards you have achieved such as Duke of Edinburgh, sports achievements, music awards (e.g. Grade 4 Piano) etc. It can also include any charity/fundraising activities you have taken part in or organised outside of school. Don't forget to mention if you are signed up to do the NCS (National Citizenship Service) at the end of Year 11.

Write about your plans for the future

- In this section you could write about what you would like to do in the future and why; explaining how your chosen subject/s can help you achieve this.

Guidance and Writing Structures

Useful sentence starters for writing a personal statement

I am a Year 11 student at School studying GCSEs in.....	My favourite subjects are....	I am currently.....
My strengths are.....	I am proud of.....	I enjoy.....
My greatest achievement(s) is/are....	I plan to.....	I hope to.....
I intend to.....	This year.....	While at school.....
Outside of school.....	Alongside my school work I.....	Last term I.....
Recently.....	During the summer.....	I work hard to.....
To develop my skills in.....	To achieve.....	To improve.....
I find / have foundchallenging/difficult	In addition.....	Furthermore.....

What is a Skill? A skill is something that can be developed or improved upon through training or practice. This could be in a work place or education setting.

Skills you can include in your personal statement

Team work	Verbal / oral communication	Good listener
organisation	Time management	ICT skills
Planning	Reading	Written communication
Analysing	Presenting	Researching
Problem solving	Leadership	Decision making

What is a Quality? A quality is part of your personality. It often describes the way you interact with others or behave.

Qualities you can include in your personal statement

Adaptability	Flexibility	Proactive approach
Reliability	Caring / friendly	Inquisitive
Patient	Polite	Punctual
Responsible	Dedicated	Confident
Positive	Ambitious	Conscientious
Honest	Hard working / diligent	Helpful
Thoughtful	Proactive	Adventurous



Useful Websites

The following websites provide further information on how to write a personal statement; including top tips, Dos and Don'ts, and example personal statements:

- [Student Room](#)
- [Focus Point](#)

Guidance and Writing Structures



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Example personal statements



Over the page, you will find three example personal statements. Evaluate what you like and dislike about the example personal statements. Consider things such as: is the content clear and informative? Is the content free from spelling and/or grammatical errors? Do you know what the applicants want to study at college and why? (Reviewing example personal statements can help you to develop your own.)



Example 1

I am a charismatic and outgoing individual who can naturally interact with people. During discussions I am able to listen and respond to opinions of other people and put across my opinion as well. I am always reliable and responsible, with every intention of fulfilling my potential in everything I do. I prefer to stay within a close group of friends, however despite this I am able to cooperate and merge with other social groups and easily create connections with my peers. I am also able to speak Bengali which helps in widening my friendship groups to people who are also able to speak Bengali.

Throughout my school years and life outside of school I have had many different interests and hobbies; however I have to say that Badminton is one of my favourite interests. I enjoy the main aspects of badminton and have a real desire to improve my knowledge and skills of the game. In addition, I enjoy watching sports on TV and finding out the latest news headlines of specific sports. These include: Football, Snooker, Boxing etc. In my spare time I volunteer at a local charity shop which helps support children hospices around Cambridge. By volunteering at a charity shop, I am able to understand how important charity is as well as having some experience in a working environment. I feel that all of these interests have shaped me into a better person, and have taught me valuable lessons, such as money handling and communication with others in the community which I can use in everyday situations.

I take great pride in being able to achieve in everything I do, whether it's inside or outside of school. Throughout my years at school, I have been awarded the Year Coordinator Award which means that for that year I have exceeded everyone in terms of levels and behaviour. The following year led me to win the Form Tutor award which means that in a form tutors eyes I have excelled in my form group and set a standard for my younger peers to aim for. Saying this I still wish to build on my experiences and achievements by focusing on what is required of me to succeed in all my courses and activities throughout my life. Furthermore my accomplishments have meant that I can succeed in everything I do, and that dedication leads to achievement.

After leaving school I intend to go to sixth form and continue my further education. The reason for this is because I want to expand my knowledge in the subjects that I want to pursue. In terms of courses, I would have to say that I would be interested in going down the science route, however specialising in Chemistry or Biochemistry. The reason I have chosen to go down this route is because from a young age I have always had an interest Chemistry and have always enjoyed the concept of being able to create consumer goods using Chemistry or medicine to help people. However I am still deciding possible careers in this sector due to the vast options for this subject. If I wish to pursue just Chemistry then I may decide to go into the chemical engineering sector. Despite saying this I still would like to go to university and get a degree in Biochemistry or Chemistry. Even though I enjoy the idea of Chemical engineering, I still can't rule out the idea of going down Biochemistry and helping people and creating medicines, which I can also pursue in University and aim for a degree in Chemistry or Biochemistry.

Example 2

I am interested in joining xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Sixth Form College because I want to gain A-levels and maybe advance into university. I think that by going to the xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx sixth form I will gain these A-levels and advance to university.

I have good attendance, punctuality, behaviour, homework and classwork.

I have good skills in communicating which, I developed during work experience. I also have skills in teamwork and have strong self-confidence, also which I gained from work experience. At work experience I learned more about computers and how they work, also I learned more about architecture and using Information technology to produce architectural drawings. I have good business, computer and mathematics knowledge, which I hope to gain A-levels in. I am very pleased with gaining an A grade in both Information technology and business studies also I am very pleased with the A grade in Graphics, also a subject which I hope to study at A-level.

I have recently done my mock GCSE's and I have learned that a lot of preparation has to be done for success in these exams. I also have to prepare for my mock interview. Also workload in school has been increasing in both class-work and coursework; I have learned that if we do not meet the deadlines then workload increases even more!

In my spare time I go out with my friends and play football and cricket. I used to play cricket for a club and here I met new people, where I gained communication skills and increased my self-confidence I am also a season ticket holder for Bolton Wanderers and I have met new people at the ground, and also by needing to communicate with people at the ticket office. I like listening to music and playing a lot of sports. I sometimes help my uncle with decorating and I meet new people and gain more decorating skills

At college I hope to gain three A-levels in maths, physics, graphics and business studies. From there I hope to go to university and do a course in architecture, interior design or designing cars. I hope to then work in architecture or for an automobile firm.

Example 3

I am a reliable, self-motivated, confident person. I can relate well to both members of staff and students I am co-operative and enthusiastic in many things I do both in and out of school.

My attendance and punctuality have been of a very high standard

In Year 11 was elected to be a Prefect by both pupils and staff, this involves working in groups, co-operating with staff and attending functions both in and out of school hours.

Outside school I get great pleasure from many different sporting activities one of these being skiing, which I have participated in for seven years. I train at the Ashford Ski Village on Saturday mornings and Thursday evenings and compete in many professional races throughout the year. This involves racing against the best in the country. I have achieved my 1, 2 and 3 star awards and have been presented with my bronze 'Instructors Award'. I also enjoy trampolining, badminton, dancing, table tennis, listening to music and spending time with my friends.

In year 10 the form tutors were asked to present a Certificate of Achievement, to two students for a specific reason. I was chosen for this award for 'outstanding progress' with my studies.

Something I will always treasure is the memory of all the hard work I have put into taking part in three performances of 'Hairspray'. This involves giving up your spare time to work on an 'act' which you then perform on stage in front of parents, teachers, family and friends. In the end it is an extremely rewarding feeling. For Community Action I went to Parklands Nursery where I worked with young children between 1 and 5 years of age.

My Work Experience placement was at Sheffield University Television Studios. Due to the nature of my placement I decided to present my Work Experience project in audio visual form by creating a video based on the time I spent there. For this reason it has been suggested by my teachers that I should be nominated for a special award from the Governing Board. I thoroughly enjoyed my Work Experience placement and developed an endless number of new skills.

I also arranged to attend a one week Work Experience placement at a solicitors firm called xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx during the six weeks summer holiday. My supervisor, Mr xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx said the following about me: "she was given certain tasks to perform and on each occasion they were carried out with diligence and care. Throughout her stay her dress, manner and behaviour were excellent."

I have not yet decided on a future career so I intend to go on to college to study A Levels. This will give me time to decide on a future career.



Personal Statement Template

✓ Lets start structuring our Personal Statement



Paragraph 1 – Intro (who are you?)	Paragraph 2 – Experience & Interests	Paragraph 3 – Future Aspirations



WRITING A CV



CV Writing



- What is a CV?
- What do you think the abbreviation stands for?
- Why is it important to have an up to date CV?

CV Writing



What is a CV?

A summary of a job applicant's professional experience and educational background, along with other relevant information regarding the candidate's qualifications.

What do you think the abbreviation stands for?

Curriculum vitae

Why is it important to have an up to date CV?

When you apply for a training course or job you will be expected to submit a CV. This CV will then be used to short list for interview.

CV Writing



Google LLC is an American multinational corporation and technology company focusing on online advertising, search engine technology, cloud computing, computer software, quantum computing, e-commerce, consumer electronics, and artificial intelligence.

There are a variety of jobs at Google these include

- engineering and tech
- sales, service and support
- consumer hardware



CV Writing

Today you will be working as the staffing team at Google LLC.

It is your responsibility to select 3 people for interview.

This is called shortlisting.

The job you are shortlisting for is trainee software engineer.

A software engineer creates computer programmes. Their primary duties include coding, identifying and fixing bugs and recommending programme developments.

You will have a selection of CVs to look through.

As a group you must decide the best applicants for interview.



CV Writing



With your group discuss the qualities you would be looking for in an employee.

- Qualifications.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Willingness to learn.
- Good communication.
- Good attendance and punctuality
- Self-motivation.
- Works well under pressure.
- Can meet deadlines.
- Passionate about career/job.
- Honest.
- Professional.

CV Writing



As a group you have 10 minutes to look through the candidates CV's

Decide on 2 people to interview

The personal details of each candidate have been removed.

Many companies now do this, why?

On average a CV is looked at for approximately 30 seconds to a minute. It is recommended that a CV is 1-2 pages.



Candidate 1

Personal profile

I am a highly motivated and detail orientated recent college leaver with an Applied Diploma in Information Technology. I am passionate about developing strong programming skills and I can contribute to innovative software development projects. I can learn new technologies quickly and I can apply problem solving techniques to create effective solutions. I am good at problem solving and have a methodical approach to troubleshooting and debugging. I am eager to join a dynamic team as a Trainee Software Engineer to further develop technical skills and gains hands on experience in the software engineering field.

Employment history

British Heart Foundation (Volunteering)	October 2023 - Present
Stockroom volunteer	
Working behind the scenes to sort through donations and prepare them for the shop floor. Working as part of a team of volunteers.	

Education

	Grade	September 2016 - July 2021
GCSE English	5	
GCSE Maths	7	
GCSE Science	6	
GCSE French	6	
GCSE Computer Science	6	
GCSE Geography	4	
	Grade	September 2021 - July 2023
Information Technology Applied Diploma	Merit	

Hobbies, interests and achievements

I like building websites and coding in my spare time as I find this helps develop my IT and computer skills. I also enjoy running and have joined a local running team, we often take part in group running competitions and this has not only helped me stay fit but also developed my team work and leadership skills.



Candidate 2

Personal profile

I am a college leaver that enjoys IT and computers and would like a job as a software engineer. I have done well at college and have passed my qualifications. I am a friendly person that enjoys working with others and would like to learn more about software engineering from people that are already doing the job.

Key skills

Practical skills: I like making things and I have fixed a few things around the house.

Communication skills: I am good at giving my ideas in class.

Teamwork: I have played football at school with my friends.

Education

	Grade	September 2017 - July 2022
GCSE Maths	4	
GCSE English	5	
GCSE Science	4	
GCSE Computer Science	4	
GCSE History	3	
BTEC Sports level 2	Pass	
	Grade	September 2022 - July 2024
Information Technology Applied Diploma	Pass (predicted)	

Hobbies, interests and achievements

I enjoy socialising with my friends. I like watching TV and I sometimes take my dog for a walk.



Candidate 3

Personal profile

I am leaving college this summer with an Applied Diploma in Information Technology and I am highly motivated and eager to start my career as a Trainee Software Engineer. My passion for software development and problem-solving has driven me to gain strong foundational knowledge in various programming languages, web development, and database management. I am confident that my technical skills, combined with my ability to learn quickly and adapt to new technologies, make me an excellent candidate for this position. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to new projects and grow within a team at your company. I possess a range of skills that are essential for success in the software engineering field. As a team player, I excel in team environments and I am effective in communicating ideas and solutions. My organisational skills and punctuality ensure that I meet deadlines and I can manage my time effectively. I am passionate about IT and continuously seek to expand my knowledge and expertise. I have also demonstrated leadership skills through various extracurricular activities and being part of the school leadership team, which have improved my ability to guide and support others. This makes me a valuable asset to any team.

Key skills

Problem solving skills: I enjoy solving problems and my favourite subjects at school were maths, science and computer science. This skill has developed more since I studied Applied IT at college and I have been given problems that I needed to fix or overcome. I am now familiar with Java, Python and JavaScript which helps me with this.

Teamwork: At work (insurance company) I worked alongside others as part of a team. I would be given tasks to complete from other team members and I would make sure they were completed to a high standard. I have been involved in many other teams, school leadership team and netball and I enjoy working with others.

Communication: I am a good communicator and this has been shown when I was at school and I often took part in presentations, even to the whole year group or school.

Paying attention to detail: When I worked for an insurance company I had to enter data into spreadsheets and check if there were any mistakes. I also had to meet deadlines and was praised for my ability to listen carefully to what was being said.

Numeracy skills: At school I gained a high maths GCSE grade. I also took part in the regional maths competition with other schools where we came third place.

Leadership skills: At school I was part of the school's leadership team where myself and other students worked alongside the teachers to make changes in the school. We raised money for the school's P.E. department. I also enjoy being part of a netball team where I occasionally will be captain.

Punctuality: My attendance is always excellent and I was always on time for school, college and work. I received an attendance award in year 8, 9 and 11.

Education

	Grade	September 2017 - July 2022
GCSE English	6	
GCSE Maths	7	
GCSE Science	8	
GCSE Computer Science	4	
GCSE History	5	
GCSE German	6	
GCSE Business	7	
GCSE Religious Studies	6	
	Grade	September 2022 - July 2024
Information Technology Applied Diploma	Distinction (predicted)	



COLLEGE INTERVIEWS



College Interview Questions



- 1. Tell me about yourself. This question seems easier than it is. How do you reduce your whole life to a few sentences? And it's hard to avoid commonplace answers like "I'm friendly" or "I'm a good student." Of course you want to demonstrate that you're friendly and studious, but try also to say something memorable here that really makes you different from other college applicants. Did you teach your dog to play the piano? Do you make a killer wild strawberry pie? Do you do your best thinking when on a 100-mile bike ride? Do you read books late at night with a flashlight?
- 2. Why are you interested in our college? Be specific when answering this, and show that you've done your research. What specifically about the college distinguishes it from others you are considering? The interviewer is hoping that you are interested in the college for reasons other than peer pressure or convenience. Similarly, if you say you applied entirely because of a parent or teacher's recommendation, you'll be suggesting that you lack initiative and have few thoughts of your own.
- 3. What can I tell you about our college? You can almost guarantee that your interviewer will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions. Make sure you have some, and make sure your questions are thoughtful and specific to the particular college. Avoid questions like "when is the application deadline?" or "how many subjects do you offer?"
- 4. Who in your life has most influenced you? There are other variations of this question: Who's your hero? What historical or fictional character would you most like to be like? This can be an awkward question if you haven't thought about it, so spend a few minutes considering how you would answer. Identify a few real, historical, and fictional characters you admire, and be prepared to articulate WHY you admire them.
- 5. Why do you want to study? Realise that you don't need to have decided on a particular course when you apply to college, and your interviewer will not be disappointed if you say you have several interests and have not yet decided. However, if you have identified a course, be prepared to explain why. Avoid saying that you want to study something because you'll make a lot of money one day -- your passion for a subject will make you a good college student, not your greed.
- 6. What do you do for fun in your free time? "Hangin' out and chillin'" is a weak answer for this question. College life obviously isn't all work, so the admissions folks want students who will do interesting and productive things even when they aren't studying. Do you write? Fish? Play a sport? Use a question such as this one to show that you are well-rounded with a variety of interests.
- 7. Do your predicted grades accurately reflect your effort and ability? In the interview or on your application, you often have an opportunity to explain a bad grade or a bad year at school. Be careful with this issue -- you don't want to come across as a moaner or as someone who blames others for a low grade. However, if you really did have extenuating circumstances, let the college know.

During the interview, DO NOT...



- 1. Be Late Your interviewers are busy people. Interviewers are probably taking time out of their full-time jobs to meet with you, and admissions folks often have back-to-back appointments scheduled. Lateness disrupts schedules and shows irresponsibility on your part.
- 2. Underdress Business casual is your safest bet, but the main thing is to look neat and tidy. You'll look like you don't care if you show up wearing ripped jeans or low cut top.
- 3. Talk Too Little Your interviewer wants to get to know you. If you answer every question with a "yes," "no," or a grunt, you're not impressing anyone, and you're not demonstrating that you can contribute to the intellectual life of the campus.
- 4. Chew Gum It's distracting and annoying.
- 5. Show Disinterest This should be a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised what some students will say. A comment like "you're my backup school" or "I'm here because my parents told me to apply" is an easy way to lose points during the interview.
- 6. Fail to Research the College If you ask questions that could easily be answered by the college's website, you'll send the message that you don't care enough about the school to do a little research.
- 7. Lie This should be obvious, but some students do get themselves in trouble by fabricating half-truths or exaggerating during the interview.
- 8. Be Rude Good manners go a long way. Shake hands. Address your interviewer by name. Say "thank you." Introduce your parents if they are in the waiting area. Say "thank you" again.
- 9. Mobile Phones Switch off your mobile phone before the interview. If you forget and it rings, apologise but don't answer it!!