



SELECTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR COUNSELORS

Not only do you need to do your homework about the organization with which you are interviewing, but you also need to anticipate the types of questions you may be asked – and be prepared for how to answer them clearly and succinctly. The following questions are designed to help you think about and prepare for your interview.

GENERAL COUNSELING

Experience

- Describe your previous experience. How will it help you in this position?
- Can you give us some examples of where you have displayed initiative as a counselor?
- Tell us about any special projects that you've done.
- What are your thoughts on group work or group counseling? What kinds of groups are you prepared to handle? How would you handle confidentiality?
- What experiences have you had that make you feel capable of being a counselor?
- What has been your most rewarding experience?
- What have you done in the area of career counseling?
- What have you done to keep abreast of current practices in counseling & psychology?
- What is the counseling theory that you most closely follow?
- What is the most creative and innovative counseling technique you have used?
- What kind of records do you keep of your counseling sessions?
- What might your professional development plan look like?
- What new programs have you initiated?
- What technology applications do you see being useful in your work?
- What was the name of the student/client who had the greatest impact on during your internship? Tell us a little about the situation.

Competencies

- How do you know when to refer a student/client to another professional?
- How would you deal with an unmotivated student/client (to raise their expectations)?
- How would you handle an irate parent or client?
- How would you handle serious personal problems revealed to you through counseling? i.e. drugs, alcohol, sexual identity.
- If you suspected child abuse towards one of your students/clients, what would you do?

Roles and Responsibilities

- Are you opposed to working above and beyond business hours to get the job done?
- During the year there are some busy times and some slow times. What types of things would you do during the slow times?
- How do you foster a good working relationship with clients, staff, counselors and administrators?
- How do you handle conflict with a colleague, parent, or administrator?
- How do you see group work being fit into the day?

Personal Qualities

- How do you handle criticism?
- How do you handle stress?
- How do you keep yourself organized? Discuss how you multitask.
- How do you see the word "leader" fitting in to your role as a counselor?
- If I had observed you how would I know that you're the right person for us to hire?
- What are your strengths or weaknesses?
- What do you bring to this position that is unique?
- What do you think is the most important characteristic of a counselor?
- What evidence could you provide of your commitment?
- What is it that you like about (level) school students/clients?
- Where do you see yourself in the next five years?
- Why did you choose counseling as a career?
- Tell us what you know about XYZ School/Organization? What makes you want to work at our School/Organization?
- What is the most appealing aspect of counseling to you? What is the least appealing aspect?

Behavioral Questions

- What was the most challenging professional situation you've encountered and how did you handle it? Were you prepared to handle this situation? In hindsight, would you have handled this situation any differently?
- Describe a time when you faced a stressful situation that demonstrated your coping skills.
- Tell me about a time when you had too many things to do and were required to prioritize your tasks.
- What is your typical way of dealing with conflict? Give me an example.
- Tell me about a difficult decision you've made in the last year.
- Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
- Give me an example of when you motivated others.
- Describe a situation that best demonstrates your ability to be flexible and adapt to a new situation.
- Give me an example of a time when you identified a problem, gathered information, and recommended a solution.

SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIFIC

Roles and Relationships

- How would you deal with student/teacher personality conflicts?
- How would you go about establishing a working relationship with counselors and faculty?
- How would you go about identifying students who are at risk?
- How would you work with a student whose parents come in and tells you the kid is having problems but don't tell him I told you?
- If you can't make a parental contact during the day, what procedure would you follow?
- What are your thoughts on encouraging parental involvement in the counseling process?
- What are your views on confidentiality? What sort of information do you consider confidential? To the student? To the faculty? To the parents? To prospective employers? To the college admissions office?
- What do you think the role of the counselor is in preventing school violence?
- What experiences have you had in working with special education students?
- When considering ethical standards and school policies, how would you handle a conflict between the two?

Scheduling/Time Management

- Because time is a scarce resource in schools today, and because of a strong push for improved standardized test scores, best educational practices suggest that in-class guidance lessons not take away from classroom instructional minutes. How will you address this issue as a school counselor?
- How would you divide your time between meeting the immediate needs of the students and keeping up with the paperwork?
- What do you do with a student who stops you on the way to lunch or comes in without an appointment?

Post-High School Planning

- Of all the areas that are handled by a high school counselor which is the area that you feel strongest in? In which area do you think you need the greatest improvement? (e.g. College, career, crisis intervention, special education services, financial aid, student scheduling, academic improvement). What is your plan for improvement in this area?
- How do feel about writing letters of recommendation (HS)?
- What methods would you use to help a student make the decision regarding higher education, vocational training or joining the work force? How would you involve the parents in this decision?
- What are your plans for increasing your familiarity with various colleges over the next three years?
- What experience have you had with the college admissions process? If a student were planning on applying to "inappropriate" schools, what would you tell him?