



We asked doctoral students who interviewed at the 2007 AMA Summer Educators' Conference in Washington, DC to reflect on their preparation for interviews. Here is a synthesis of the responses we received.

"What are the top three things you are *glad you did* in preparing for Summer AMA?"

Preparing in the *Months* Leading to AMA

- Ensured my commitment to my area of study
- Consulted my advisor and colleagues
- Contacted schools early and sent packets early
- Did not apply to schools that I wasn't interested in
- Had defended my dissertation proposal before attending Summer AMA
- Had my CV critiqued
- Prepared a teaching philosophy
- Prepared a job presentation
- Read the notes on how to survive AMA
- Started preparations early
- Stayed organized
- Wrote research papers

Preparing in the *Weeks* Leading to AMA

- Bought two suits and several shirts; spent money buying clothes I really liked (and tried on outfits in advance to ensure comfort)
- Called schools that I was interested in but had not heard from yet
- Conducted mock interviews with faculty before Summer AMA
- Conducted thorough background research about the schools I was planning to interview with
- Determined in advance what I could offer each school and what they could offer me
- Examined vitas of interviewers and researched their backgrounds (to help establish a personal connection with the interviewers)
- Focused my materials
- Had all documents (CV, dissertation summary etc.) ready
- Made color transparencies for all interviewers
- Made good handouts - although I didn't use them in every meeting, I was glad I had them if people asked

- Memorized faculty names
- Obtained cell phone numbers of key interviewers prior to attending
- PRACTICED, PRACTICED, PRACTICED
- Prepared for the possible questions, including general questions, and my responses
- Put together job application packets to leave with recruiters
- Rehearsed my talk by myself until I knew exactly what I was going to say, and made sure it was short enough to fit

Scheduling for AMA

- Arrived a day early to adjust to the time difference
- Didn't set-up too many interviews
- Did not interview with schools that I wasn't interested in
- Made my hotel reservation early so I could ensure I would be in the conference hotel
- Scheduled at least a one hour break between each interview
- Set-up interviews early

Preparing the Day of AMA

- Brought another person who could act as my personal assistant throughout the week-end
- Got a good night's sleep
- Ordered room service
- Organized my suits and clothes for each day of the conference

During the Interviews

- Just enjoyed the experience and talking about my research
- Listened to interviewers
- Relaxed
- Took notes during the interviews because I knew I wouldn't have time to do so after the interviews

"What do you wish you had *done differently?*"

Preparing in the *Months* Leading to AMA

- Defended my dissertation proposal
- Had a paper under review somewhere
- Talked to more of my doctoral student colleagues to find out what they were doing to get ready
- Pushed my dissertation work to a more finished point

Preparing in the *Weeks* Leading to AMA

- Brought more comfortable shoes (or insoles!) – lots of walking was involved
- Had some power bars or snacks
- Followed-up more with applications that were sent
- Had done a better job of rehearsing my "five minute talk" about my dissertation (vs. only the longer version)
- Made sure all of my clothes fit well, and that I had a lot of clothes
- Prepared earlier
- Provided a better answer to the question, "Why are you interested in our school?"
- Put together better slides
- Researched the school's location in more depth
- Spent more time thinking about future research projects I want to work on, rather than work done so far

Scheduling for AMA

- Accepted fewer interviews using more selective criteria
- Allowed more time in between interviews
- Avoided lobby meetings
- Booked a room in the conference hotel
- Cancelled interviews from schools I knew I wouldn't go to
- Had mentally prepared myself for the "fast and furious" interviews in some cases - these can make a person feel less than human!
- Had not interviewed on Monday
- Organized my schedule a little differently
- Prioritized and allocated interview time slots based on my criteria
- Registered earlier
- Scheduled time for lunch

Preparing the Day of AMA

- Ordered room service
- Made sure I was less stressed out
- Practiced in an actual hotel room
- Not gotten sick

During the Interviews

- Gotten a business card from each interviewer so I could remember the names of all the people that were in the room
- Not have wasted paper bringing a ton of extra copies of my vita