

Interviews Made Simple

**For imaging students at
St. Mary's Hospital School of Medical Imaging
&
Southside College of Health Sciences**





Nail Your Interview with These Tips!

Dress professionally.

Men should wear neck tie, dress shirt, nice slacks and be neatly shaven. Suit or jacket optional.

Women should wear a nice blouse or sweater. Dress pants. Jacket optional.

For all: iron everything; minimal fragrance and jewelry; perfect hygiene; neat fingernails.

If coming from clinical or your job, clean scrubs are also acceptable.

Arrive 10 minutes early -- but prepare to wait -- since priorities in healthcare change quickly. Do everything possible to avoid arriving late and plan ahead for parking challenges. If you are running late, call and let the manager know.

Bring your resume.

Need help? Just contact Allison_ Peterson @ bshsi.org or call (804) 627-5381. On-site some weekdays in room 232 at the Bon Secours College of Nursing location in Richmond.

Smile.

Shake hands firmly, make eye contact, and introduce yourself when you meet the hiring manager. If this is a group or panel interview, make eye contact with all interviewers when you answer questions.

At end of interview, thank them.

Thank everyone for their time, express continued interest in the position, and indicate that you look forward to hearing from them once they've made their decision. Follow up with a thank you email - re-stating your interest and what you have to offer.



Common Interview Questions And How to Handle Them



Tell me about yourself.

A common “ice-breaker” to start the interview. Don’t tell a long, personal history or where you were born, your age, marital status, number of children.

Instead, prepare a few sentences in advance that summarize your most recent education and work experience. This can also be a brief story explaining how you arrived at this point, and why you’re interested in the specific opening.

Good Example: “I am graduating in March from _____ (name of school) I come from a family of healthcare workers. My aunt and cousins are all nurses and my brother is a CT Tech. My previous career was in retail where I worked with all kinds of people, helping them make furniture choices for their homes.”



Tell me about your strengths.

Radiology managers need to know what you are good at and what sets you apart from other applicants. Everyone possesses strengths. Often, these are qualities about which friends or employers compliment you.

Strengths are things you do naturally well. Some interviewers also ask about a weakness. Be honest about an area where you have struggled in the past, and how you have worked to improve it.

These questions reveal how well you know yourself.

Examples of strengths include:

- **Assertiveness** - will you speak up and ask questions when you need to? Can you advocate for a patient?
- **Leadership** – do you have a history of leadership? Those patterns often start early and continue throughout life. Give an example of how you have demonstrated leadership.
- **Listening** – listening to directions; listening to patients, physicians, managers.

- **Interpersonal Communication** – ability to handle upset patients, anxious children, ability to interact with physicians, nurses, other staff, etc. Ability to explain procedures to the patient, observe what’s going on in a situation. Give an example in your interview.
- **Time Management**- very important in busy healthcare settings. Give examples of how you manage your time.
- **Problem Solving** – can you “think on your feet?” Can you analyze and solve problems?
- **Attention to Detail:** – do you pay attention to the details? Are you accurate? Have you caught errors before? Give examples.
- **Standards of Quality** – how do you show you care about doing things right? Have you ever made quality improvements? Explain.
- **Stress Management** – if you seem to handle stress better than most, say so. Give an example.



Give an example of how you’ve worked on a team.

Teamwork is one of the most highly valued skills managers look for in job candidates. Be prepared to give examples of times when you worked effectively as a team member. Think of difficult people you’ve managed to work well with. Give examples.

During the interview, the manager will be thinking: “Can this person work with the team I have in my department?”



Describe your reliability. Reliability means reporting to work on time, staying focused on your shift, and doing the job well. A reliable person is someone others can count on.

Try to find a way of telling the manager that if you are hired, you will be reliable by drawing on your dependability in past jobs.

Good Examples: “I have had excellent class attendance throughout imaging school. In my weekend job, I never call in sick and I am willing to work extra hours during our busy season. My manager can always count on me.”

“Even while attending college full-time, I have worked 25 hours per week and my manager considers me to be highly reliable.”



Why would you be the best person for this job? This question can catch you off guard. A good response may be to highlight one of your strengths again...or an experience that sets you apart from others.

▶ *Good Examples: I have been told by past managers that I’m one of the hardest working employees in my department. I must have inherited my work ethic from my family. My mother has almost always worked 2 jobs, and I’ve worked since I was 16.*

► *“One of my strengths is my love of learning. Because of that, I’m always eager to grow and develop my skills. If I am offered this job, I would be a good investment because I will never stop learning. I hope to gain certification in other modalities within the next 2 years.”*



What interests you about this position, or our hospital?

Draw a connection between yourself and the job or organization. Be prepared to explain how your interests align with the opening. Tell how your values are a good “match” for those of the organization. The organization’s web site (home page) is a good place to read about the organization’s values and mission.

(Bon Secours Mercy Health has these values: Human Dignity/Respect, Compassion, Stewardship, Integrity, and Service.)

Good examples:

- *“I value doing a quality job for all patients, regardless of their background. Whether I am transporting a patient to X-ray or positioning a patient, I strive to do the very best job possible and always treat them with compassion.”*
- *“I’ve heard you have one of the busiest ERs in the area. I thrive when caring for a variety of patients, and I can handle the fast pace. I would really enjoy working in the ER.”*
- *“I am very interested in orthopedics. I think working in this practice would give me great experience with a variety of patients with different orthopedic needs.”*

Give me an example of a time...

Situational questions like this prompt you to recall past actions, like “Think about a time when xyz happened. How did you handle it?” Give yourself a moment to think of the best possible answer – and then respond.

Examples: ►

- Think of a time when you had to handle a difficult patient (or customer, co-worker, etc.) Describe what happened and how you responded. What was the outcome?
- Tell me about a time you’ve received constructive criticism from a clinical faculty or supervisor. What happened and how did you respond to it?
- Describe the biggest challenge in your last job/clinical and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a situation where you had to demonstrate creative problem solving.
- Tell me about the accomplishment of which you are most proud.



The Peer or Panel Interview

This type of interview involves a group of employees interviewing the job candidate. These are common in healthcare. Here are specific suggestions:

- ▶ Arrive 10 minutes early, but be prepared to wait. It sometimes take longer than expected to gather a group together, even if they have this appointment on their calendar. If you are still waiting 15 minutes after the interview time, let someone know.
- ▶ Smile and take a deep breath before entering the room.
- ▶ When you are introduced, try to shake hands and introduce yourself if the space permits it and if the group seems open to it. If the room is crowded or no one makes a move in your direction, just smile and be seated. (You can always shake hands at the end when you get ready to leave.)
- ▶ It's OK to say that you're nervous. Most all job candiates are nervous. The group will usually act friendlier and less threatening if you go ahead and just admit it. They don't want you to be nervous.

Typically, group members take turns asking questions. This can be awkward if they have not interviewed together before. Knowing this might keep you from thinking that you are giving bad answers.

As you respond to interview questions, make eye contact with all the group members. Don't just look at the person asking the question.

Don't be surprised if the team members take notes. They've probably been asked to. Continue to look at the group members individually because they will glance up from time-to-time.

- ▶ Give yourself a moment to think of the best answer before responding to the question. Ask for the question to be repeated if necessary.
- ▶ If it is a multi-part question, answer it to the best of your ability and then say, "Did I answer that completely?" or "Did I cover everything you asked?"

Questions to Ask at the End of your Interview

At the end of every job interview, the interviewer will probably ask if you have any questions. Your questions may tell whether you would be a good fit. Consider asking 1-2 questions along these lines, if this information has not been given during the conversation.

? From your perspective, what qualities are needed in order to be successful in this role?

By asking, you can determine if you'll be able to give what the job demands.

? What advice do you have for a new Radiologic / Ultrasound Tech working here? This gives insight into what the manager feels is important.

? What has your experience been with hiring students from our school in the past? This will give you an idea if others before you have been successful, or if you are going to be the first from your college to work there.

? Tell me how orientation / training takes place?

? When do you hope to make your decision?

? Will you be inviting candidates back for additional interviews?

**For more information, resume help, interview practice,
job search guidance, etc. contact:**



Allison Peterson, MS Ed.
Manager, Career Services
Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing
St. Mary's School of Medical Imaging
Allison_Peterson@bshsi.org
Office: Room 232 at BSMCON campus



Blakeney Hartka, M.Ed.
Career Advisor
Southside College of Health Sciences
Blakeney_Hartka@bshsi.org
Office: Room 210 at SCHS campus

Email for an appointment.