

Heâ€™s Been Through 8 Parent Interviews. Letâ€™s Ask Him A Few Questionsâ€¦

Description



Barry Perlstein, my awesome husband, takes a few minutes to answer my questions about his perspective on [parent interviews](#). Together, weâ€™ve survived eight [parent interviews](#) for kindergarten and secondary school. Some were great, others were just ok and one was really awfulâ€” I write about it in [Beyond The Brochure](#).

Christina: Whatâ€™s the best analogy for parent interviews?

Barry: Meeting your in-laws for the first time. Your goal is to do no harm!

Christina: Were admissions directors what you expected?

Barry: Yes and no. Some lacked basic interview and social skills. Then it falls on you to carry the interview and to make sure you tell them about your kid.

Christina: What question most surprised you?

Barry: The schools where it seemed like they were reading from a checklist of questions. It was obvious they were just looking for red flags or deal breakers but not interested in getting to know us.

Christina: What information did you feel was most important to share?

Barry: Give a feel for who your kid is that might not come through in the written application. Use specific anecdotes!

Christina: Were you nervous about what to wear?

Barry: No. I wore business casual. Do no harm!

Christina: Did the admissions director's personality influence your view of school?

Barry: Yes. They set the tone and are one of the first points of contact.

Christina: Are admissions directors forthcoming about what they are looking for?

Barry: No. They don't give insight into who gets in or how they build their student body. They will only answer questions about curriculum and general questions about the school.

Christina: Can you leave an interview knowing if your kid got in?

Barry: Not really. But you can often tell when things did not go well. It's hard to read the tea leaves in these interviews.

Christina: There's an admissions official at a super-popular K-6 school who I've heard keeps falling asleep during parent interviews. What would you do if that happened?

Barry: That's rude and unprofessional. I'd ask for another parent interview.

Christina: Any other words of advice?

Barry: Be yourself. Try not to be nervous. Ask questions, but keep them positive. Don't criticize the school. Make sure you have a "softball" question ready to ask something that compliments the school to let them know you're interested and have done your homework about that specific school.

Thanks for answering my questions!

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