

# APTA Maryland Mentor Night

May 4, 2021

## *Interview Preparation – What Employers Want To Know*

### **1. Why do you want to work as a physical therapist/physical therapy assistant?**

**What They Want to Know:** Employers are interested in understanding your mindset about the position and your career path. Since physical therapy is part of the health care and service industry, it's beneficial for potential hires to have a compassionate nature and desire to help others. Applicants who approach the job as being a way to aid people as they heal may also be more likely to stay longer compared to those who are only after a paycheck. What to look for in an answer:

**Sample Answer:** I want to be able to help patients heal, and focusing on them one-on-one in physical therapy will give me the chance to do that. I'll be able to work directly with them and see their progress as they achieve their goals.

### **2. How has your college experience prepared you for a career?**

**What They Want to Know:** Employers are interested not only in the relevant training in hard skills you've received in college, but also in how prepared you are to transition to the workplace.

**Sample Answer:** I feel like I've laid a strong groundwork for a career in accounting. Not only did I make high grades in my accounting and finance courses, but I also had the chance during the academic breaks to gain "real world" experience as an accounting assistant intern for ABC Financial.

### **3. What was your biggest challenge as a student, and how did you handle it?**

**What They Want to Know:** The best employees not only show up for work every day, but they also seek out opportunities to challenge themselves in order to improve their skillsets. Be prepared with an example of how you've readily embraced a difficult challenge.

**Sample Answer:** The biggest challenge for me during college was that I had to work full-time, around my studies, in order to finance my education. This meant that I didn't have a lot of free time at night or on the weekends to do anything other than study, but it also allowed me to graduate debt-free, with a 3.75 GPA.

### **4. Tell me about your work experience? How has it prepared you for a career?**

**What They Want to Know:** Many college students may not have a lot of career-related work experience when they graduate from college. However, describing summer job or work-study employment you've held can help you prove that you have a great work ethic, time-management, and teamwork competencies, and the other soft skills hiring managers look for in entry-level candidates.

**Sample Answer:** I was a store clerk in high school, and then worked each summer during college as a nursing assistant in a long term care facility. It was great being able to work with the residents while I earned becoming a physical therapist/assistant.

**5. What are you looking for in a job? What is important to you?**

**What They Want to Know:** Your response to this question will let the hiring manager know whether you share the organization's values and if you would be dedicated to their success.

**Sample Answer:** I'm looking for the chance to build upon techniques and strategies I learned in college so that I can help my patients regain pain free movement, and hopefully establish myself as a long-term employee. Stability and having a good work/life balance is important to me, as is being able to remain here in my hometown.