Twitter Thread by Melanie

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APPLYING TO GRAD SCHOOL, POST #18: INTERVIEWS (PART 4)

You've finished your interview(s) and you're tired, but it's not over quite yet! What should you do after interviews?

@OpenAcademics @PhDVoice #AcademicChatter #AcademicTwitter #phdchat #gradschool #firstgen #nontraditional

Firstly, congratulate yourself for making it through the interview! Take some time to relax and reflect on your experience, especially if you have forthcoming interviews for other programs. Take note of questions and positive and negative moments that stuck out to you.

*Huge note: PLEASE try not to beat yourself up too much if you didn't know the answer to every question in the interview. Depending on the type of interview (and interviewer) you had, there might have been many difficult questions presented to you, specifically for the purpose...

of not only seeing how much you know, but also seeing how you think and process problems when you *don't* know the answers. If you can, reason your way through the question and explain yourself as well as you can, so that they can see your way of thinking, but if you truly...

have no idea, it's perfectly fine to just say that you don't know, as opposed to rambling nonsensically and hopelessly.

That was all to say, try to make notes of tough questions so that you can be prepared for similar questions in the future, but don't beat yourself up if you...

weren't able to answer them as well as you would have hoped.

Next, I would recommend sending thank-you emails to your interviewers. My best advice is to make them brief but personal. Send an email to each interviewer thanking them for their time and their consideration, and...

if applicable, mention/thank them for anything they said or did at any point before or during the interview that you especially appreciated. For example, if they gave you some kind or encouraging comments about your current research, you can thank them for those. You can also...

take this opportunity to ask them any new questions about the program, its admissions procedures, etc. that you either didn't get a chance to ask on the day, or that you've only come up with after you finished your interviews.

If you were introduced to any current students...

during your interview and you have their contact info, you can also email them with any follow-up questions you have about the program, their experiences in the program, etc. Don't hesitate to reach out to current students, because they'll usually be honest about what they...

like/dislike about their program, and they might be able to give you some advice as well, as you continue navigating the rest of the admissions cycle. However, please stay professional! As peer-like as they may be to you, you're still an applicant, so be careful of information...

you share with them.

I've mentioned previously how important administrative staff are; please remember to thank them for their time too! Their jobs are extremely difficult, especially at this time of year, so please show them some appreciation for their diligent efforts to...

make this experience as smooth as possible for you. You can also stay in contact with them during this time and ask them any new questions you have about the program, but PLEASE don't trouble them incessantly about when you'll receive your admissions decision. If none of their...

correspondences have mentioned an approximate timeframe, then you may ask *ONCE*, but after you've received an answer, don't follow up about a decision date again until after the date they gave you has passed.

By now, you might have experienced enough of your prospective...

programs to have an idea of what aspects you like and dislike about each, but if you get to interview, the interview can give you even more information about each program. Take some time to think about what you learned from meeting and speaking with your interviewer(s),...

current students, administrative staff, and any other people you met during the experience. Some things you might consider: Did they treat you well? Did they make you feel welcome and comfortable [as much as possible in an interview setting]? Is this environment one that you...

would like to spend your grad school experience in? Do they have the support you might need, both personally and professionally?

The wait after an interview can be excruciating, but once you've done all of these things, try your best to rest and relax! Prepare for any future...

interviews, if you have more coming up, but try to occupy yourself and your thoughts elsewhere as much as you can; you've done everything you could, and you should be proud for getting this far. Sending good vibes and strength to all of you as you endure this stressful time!