

Kinnaresh Patel

Some things that might come in handy for you:

1. There is nothing like a particular center/window is more likely to give you a visa than the others. So don't waste your time.
2. Do not be nervous. I know it is easier said than done. Try and make as less of a deal of it as possible. Start your day as you would start your normal day. Listen to your favorite music. That would help to put you in a relaxed mood.
3. Try and take the earliest slot in the morning.
4. If you take the earliest slot, you would most likely join a large queue standing outside the embassy before it opens. Don't forget to take an umbrella with you especially if your center is Mumbai. If it rains you don't want to get wet while waiting in the queue outside.
5. As far as the questions are concerned I was asked the following 4 questions:

§ Which University?

§ What undergrad major?

§ How are you going to fund your educational expenses?

§ What do your parents do?

6. The interview took about 40 seconds. I didn't even have to open the folder that I had so carefully prepared. Remember that TAMU is a reputed university, and the interviewers know it, so just relax and give the answers.

Arjun Shanker

Venue: **US Embassy New Delhi**

Me: A very Good Morning (smiled as usual. Ensured eye contact, though anxious)

VO: (Wishing me back) Which University & program are you applying to?

Me: Texas A&M University; Master of Agribusiness

VO: Ok. So what was your previous degree in?

Me: Masters in Biotechnology

VO: So why a 2nd Masters? (NOTE: this Q might pop up if you hold a previous masters)

Me: It's like an MBA in Agriculture after a science major (told him want to pursue a Biz line)

VO: (replies with a Hmm) Could I see your documents (I-20, passport, financial)

Gave it

VO: I see you have a scholarship letter as well (impressed & smiles)

I just smiled back.

VO: Keeps passport & says the golden words: "Congratulations your VISA has been approved"

Me: Thank you so much & have a nice day (breathe sigh of relief)

Utsav Talati

Me: Good Morning Madam!

(I was still stressed, nervous and as well as excited but confident)

VO: Good Morning, pass me your I20 and Passport

I passed the required docs.

Seeing the I-20, VO: So you are going for Texas A&M, great school. So you want to be a Aggie (Aggie is the name of sports team of Texas A&M, so all students are called Aggies who belong to the Texas A&M)

Me: Yes Madam Howdy! (Howdy is the way of saying 'how are you?' in Texas)

VO: So, why Texas A&M?

As I was going to answer, she rephrased the question "why MS in IE at Texas A&M University?"

This sudden rephrasing of question confused me and i forgot some info. in anxiety. Still i managed to pull it off.

Me: having wide array of research experience through my research papers, research interns as well as research projects my interested in IE grew tremendously. The networks and logistics research lab under the guidance of Dr. Cetinkaya and Dr. Wang se Hung are well-known in the field of. (VO interrupted me here)

VO: How many universities you applied to?

Me: 10

VO: Name them

Me: G.Tech (I told the short name first then realized my mistake and told them the full name), Penn state, TAMU, Purdue, Rutgers....she interrupted me again

VO: how many admits

Me: 5

VO which?

Me: RIT with full first year fullfunding, Texas A & M....suddenly she asked me another question

VO: Then Why not RIT with full scholarship?

Me: Madam, Financial Aid has never been an option for me, I believe in investing in better knowledge, because i know better knowledge would reap me far more better benefits in the future.

VO: Sir i know you are excited and nervous, you are speaking very fast, please calm down.

I was thinking, madam about me speaking very fast? Mein aisa hi hoon

Me: Smiling, yeah madam.

VO: What about your funding?

Me: out of the total asset of XXCrores (she interrupted me again)

VO: Ok

Then she started typing for 1-2 seconds and then the words came "Congratulations, I am approving your Visa"

Srinath Nadimpalli

Me: Good Morning!

VI: Good Morning, how're you doing today?

Me: Am doing well. How've you been doing?

VI: Doing good. Thank you! Please pass the documents (i20 and passport)

VI: Texas A&M, I see. That's a good university!

Me: Yes indeed.

VI: Okay. What did you do at XYZ(the company I worked for)?

Me: I explained the project that I worked on, my roles and responsibilities in the project

VI: Sounds good. How many colleges did you apply to?

Me: I told him all the colleges I applied to - the status of each of these colleges. I reckon he wanted to check how honest I'm. I also reckon they already have this information with them.

VI: Alright! Looks good. I'm approving your Visa. Have a great stay there.

Me: Thank you!

Rishav Choudhary

Me: Good Morning Sir

VO: Good Morning, How r u?

Me: I am doing well

VO: So which university have u got admission into?

Me: Texas A&M University

VO: How many Universities did u apply to?

Me: Only this one

VO: Why?

Me: I thought with my GRE score I won't get admission into other colleges which I actually wanted like Stanford etc. so applied to only this college.

VO: Show me your GRE score card

VO: Okay. Your visa is approved. Have a nice stay in US.

Ankit Katiyar

Me: Good morning sir

VO: Good Morning, pass me your documents

Me: Passed my Passport, I-20

VO: Which University are you headed?

Me: Texas A&M University, College Station

VO: How many universities did u apply?

Me: 5 Sir

VO: Who will fund your education?

Me: My father and I have a loan too.

VO: Ok, I am approving your Visa

Me: Thank you sir, have a good day!

Sanjeev Singh

Consulate: Kolkata

Time: 9:15 am

Date: 5th June

A piece of advice to all who have opted or are going to opt for Kolkata consulate - Please reach early in the morning. Earlier you reach earlier you will get the slot. So, your scheduled time is actually immaterial.

At counter no. 6 - VO was a goodlooking American guy in his 30s.

Me: Good Morning sir!

VO: GM and passed him the basic docs (at another counter you will be submitting those docs and recollecting them. It includes Passport, I-20, Interview letter, HDFC receipt and Sevi's fee receipt)

VO asked me to put my left hand's four fingers then right hand's and then both the thumbs on a machine. (A sound of 'peee' suggests that you have put your fingers in correct way on the machine :D)

VO: Where are you currently staying?

Me: Bangalore

VO: Then why not the nearby consulates?

Me: I am basically from Patna and I had to collect some original financial documents from my home.

VO: Oracle is a brilliant company to work for, why do you want to go for higher studies? (I think they already have most of the information regarding us - may be the DS-160 form that we fill is accessible to them)

Me: Sir, I have been involved in development work since last two years at Oracle and now I want to pursue a career in the field of research.

VO: So, you would like to build your career at US?

Me: After finishing my master's I would like to come back and join HP Labs where good research is being carried on in the area of Pattern recognition.

VO: Why can't you join HP labs now?

Me: They prefer people with research experience and that's the reason I want to pursue my MS with thesis.

VO: What all admits you have? (Started typing something...)

Me: Apart from admit from TexasA&M University, I have admits from North Carolina State Univ., University of California, Irvine, State University of New York Stony Brook and University of Waterloo at Canada.

VO: Btw, from where you did your engineering? (He was still typing)

Me: Sir, Birla Institute of Technology and Science - Pilani, Goa Campus.

VO: Your VISA is approved. Enjoy your stay at Texas (with a wonderful smile on his face). You will get your passport in a week's time.

Me: Thanks you sir!

I felt overjoyed and ran away from the consulate :)

On the basis of my experience, I will suggest rather than spending time n energy in getting different kinds of certificate (CA, CE blah blah, which I found useless), prepare a few questions well. A day or two preparation should suffice.

Golden rule: Don't hesitate, don't stammer. VI will be a cake walk :)

Thanks

Sanjeev Singh

Vinayak Lalwani

Status: Approved

Date: 01 June

Mumbai 07:45 am

For all those who are tensed about their interviews, don't be..!

It's Texas A&M University, and those people know the importance of its name!

Me: Hello Sir, Good Morning!

VO: Good Morning, pass me the documents.

Me: Here (passed the passport and i20)

VO: So, Texas A&M univ? Why?

Me: Sir, TAMU because obviously going with the rank, secondly because some of the subjects particularly interest me over there and seniors suggested it's the best!

VO: Which other admits you receive?

Me: UW, USC, MSU, IIT, NYU

VO: Was your previous job related to construction management?

ME: yes Sir (stopped me when i was explaining how.)

VO: Your VISA has been approved Sir, Enjoy your stay at TEXAS!

(That's it)

Danish Khan

Status: 221(g) Administrative processing

Location: US Consulate General Kolkata

Program: PhD in Biochemistry

I would have been surprised if they hadn't issued the orange slip. Anything even remotely related to biology is issued 221g these days, and I was no exception!!

After a Hi/Hello, the VO asked me to give my thumb and hand impressions; asked for my docs - I gave my Passport, I-20, Offer Letter, SEVIS receipt, HDFC Bank receipt.

"So, you are going to TexasA&M"

"Yes"

"Are you married?"

"No!"

"What kind of research are you going to do at Texas A&M?"

"Well, it's basically going to be related to proteins. Trying to find new proteins in living organisms and knowing more about their structure, annotating them some functions etc."

(All through the VO was typing vociferously, and even before I finished speaking, picked up an orange form)

"All right, please wait for your call"

They called me at another counter and a VFS officer handed all my docs back and explained that I'd earned myself a 221(g) and what I need to do.

They didn't ask to see any other document. No mark sheets/transcripts, neither GRE/TOEFL scorecard, nothing else. Financial documents were not required in my case.

They retained my passport.

Ravi Chawla

Venue: The Embassy of United States, New Delhi

Interview Duration : Less than a Minute!

Status: Approved

VO: Good morning.

Me: Good morning sir!/(with a big smile)/ How are you?

VO: Fine./((Responded back with a big smile)/

/(Then I passed the passport and other documents stapled to it)/

VO: /(After taking the docs)/ Where are you headed?

Me: Sorry I could not hear you properly!

VO: /(He repeated)/ Where are you headed?

Me: Texas A&M, College Station

VO: So you are not going to UT Austin?

Me: /(Shocked for a sec! I was thinking how did he know that I applied there! I responded spontaneously without thinking much)/ With a smile I said: sir I applied but did not get an admit from Austin. Texas A&M was my best admit. I also got an admit from Michigan State!

VO: /(Nodded positively)/ Which program?

Me: PhD in Chemical Engineering.

VO: So you know they are the people who hate your school the most! /(I assumed he was talking about UT Austin, and gave my answer as follows)/

Me: Yeah sir, I know about the rivalry, Aggies vs. Longhorns! /(I read this while I was researching the schools at the time of Application in December)/

VO: /(Surprised on hearing this)/ With a smile he said your visa is approved, you will get it in 5 days!

Me: Thank you. Have a nice day! /(I smiled again) /(Actually I got confused because my Interview started just 30 seconds back! I was staring at him if he wanted to ask more but then my legs automatically moved away from the counter(lol).)/

(The Interview lasted for such a small duration I don't even remember what the Officer looked like!!! He obviously knew a lot about Texas A&M and UT Austin. He didn't bother to see any documents.

All this short duration of time I answered very honestly because you have so less time to come with a lie, so I spoke whatever I felt like and as a result was very fluent in expressing myself!)

Vangmayee Sharma

Status: 221(g) Administrative processing

Location: US Consulate New Delhi

Program: PhD Chemistry

VO: Hello! Good morning! How are you today?

Me: Good Morning Sir! I am good!

VO: Ok. So which university are you going to?

Me: Texas A&M

VO:Ok! Which campus? (Looks at i-20 & says himself:) Oh! College Station.

VO: Ok so you will be called an aggie now...

The interview was interrupted because a person behind me stepped too close to the counter & VO had to warn him.

VO: So have you finished your masters or btech.?

Me: I have finished my masters.

VO: What will you be studying?

Me: Chemistry.

VO: Ok. You are going for your PhD.

VO: (Smiling) I am approving your visa however you are required to undergo administrative processing. Proceed to counter 30 for that. Its way over there at the end of the lobby.

Me: Thank you Sir!

VO: Have a pleasant stay!

Hyderabad

Interview 1:

VO: Pass the documents. Wait here. I'll be back in a minute.

Me: ... [He didn't even wait for my response]

VO came back after a minute

VO: Hi

Me: Hello sir

VO: What are you going to study in the US?

Me: Master of Science in Management Information Systems sir

VO: Any back logs?

Me: No sir, none.

VO: What is your percentage?

Me: 77%

VO: Can I see your mark sheets?

Me: Passed the memos.

VO: Why do you want to study Information Systems?

Me: I've working as S/w Engg. for past 3 yrs. I want to get expertise in information systems along with management exposure. This will really help me grow quickly in my career.

VO: What universities did you apply?

Me: Ok State, U of Arizona, UI -Chicago, SUNY - Buffalo, U Cincinnati

VO: But why this university?

Me: TAMU is very reputed university sir. It offers balanced curriculum and also Assistantship offer made my decision easier.

VO: Ok sir, your visa is approved. You will get it in couple of days by courier.

Me: Thank you sir.

VO: Good luck.

Interview 2:

Hi, how are you today?

Hello, I'm fine. Thank you (I forgot to reciprocate!)

He's busy with his computer - After what seemed like 2 minutes,

What is your UG percentage?

81 percent

Could you please pass your mark sheets?

Sure. Do you need my degree certificate as well? (I tried talking through the window but apparently he didn't hear me. He must have seen me talk though, because)

Please talk into the intercom loud and clear

Sorry... (Didn't know what to say since I realised I was asking a stupid question)

And do you have any backlogs?

Yes, one.

One backlog. Hmm.

He's busy with his computer again...A minute or two passes

What do your parents do?

My father is a retired professor and my mother is a home maker

Retired professor of what?

Electrical engineering.

Uh huh.

Okay you'll receive this in about five to seven days.

Interview 3:

VO: Which university you are going to?

Me: Texas A&M, College station.

VO: Which all universities you applied?

Me: TAMU, UOA, UIC, IU.

VO: GRE, TOEFL scores?

Me: Said, (picked the file up expecting a question to show score cards, but he dint)

VO: who is ur sponsor?

Me: father and have a bank loan sanctioned for 16L.

VO: Your VISA has been issued.

Me: (I was shocked rather than delighted, thought what did he ask me to issue Visa to me)

Thanks..Thanks sir

(looked at VO while leaving so as to reconfirm if he is sure of his last words!!).

Mumbai

Interview1

VO: Good Morning, How are you

ME : Good Morning Officer, I am fine, How about you

VO: (was typing something) Why are you going to USA ?

ME : To pursue my Master of Sciencein Managament Information Systems from Texas A&M University.

VO: Why did you decide to go to this University ?

ME: Having completed my Diploma and undergraduate Degree in Information Technology; and after working in the IT sector for more than 2 yrs, I believe that the MS MIS course at this university will be a logical extension to my career goal of becoming a Business and IT expert when I come back to India.

VO: Where else have you applied ?

ME: TAMU, Suny Buffalo, UC, CMU and UIUC (MBA)

VO: Why did you choose TAMU then ?

ME: TAMU was my first choice. Also I have researched about this university by speaking to prof. (Dr. XXX, Dr. YYY, Dr. ZZZ) and after getting first hand experience from a couple of current students, I decided to go with TAMU.

VO : Who is sponsoring you?

ME: My parents will be sponsoring me for my education. I will also use my savings and I have a education loan sanctioned.

VO: What is your GRE score?

ME: I did not give GRE. I gave GMAT and scored 650 out of 800.

VO: Ok. your VISA is approved, your passport will be sent to you via courier.

ME: Thank you Officer. Have a good day.

Interview2

VO: Good Morning!

ME: Good Morning!

VO: What is this program you've applied to?

ME: (I explain)

VO:(after 2mins) Any relatives in the US?

ME: Yes (I explain)

VO:(after 5 mins) What are you going to do after graduating?

ME: Come back home! (I explain)

VO:(smiling) Your visa has been approved!

ME: Thank you! Have a great day!

Interview 3:

VO: Why are you going to Texas A& M

Me: To pursue Master's in Management Information Systems

VO: Why Texas A & M?

Me: Texas A & M University has a good course curriculum for the MIS program which is aligned with my field of interest which is data management.

VO: Which other universities did you apply to?

Me: Told her.

VO: Where did you get admits from?

Me: Told her.

VO: (Again) Then why Texas A&M?

Me: Repeated the above answer. She asked me to repeat my field of interest and looked a little skeptical. I added "Because it is cost effective as compared to other universities".

VO: *Nodded her head* What do your parents do?

Me: Told her.

VO: What is their annual income?

Me: Told her.

VO: I am sorry ma'am, how do you expect them to fund your education with an annual income of *?

Me: Told her about their savings and also mentioned financial aid from the university at this point.

VO: Why did you get this financial aid?

Me: It was merit based.

VO: *Nods* But why will your parents expend their entire life savings to help you do your MS in the United States especially when you have a good job at Symantec?

Me: The reason I want to do MIS is because so far I've had good technical exposure and now I want to learn about the management aspects of a business.

VO: I understand that Ma'am but I really don't understand how they will be able to fund your education.

Me: They also have investments in the amount...

VO: *Cutting across* When you return from your MS you'll be earning a maximum of 10-14 lakhs per annum in India. How do you expect to regain the amount of the cost of the program which is almost \$60000 which is 30 lakhs in INR!

Me: *Very confidently and a little indignantly at this point* It is not 60000, it is 48000 because of the financial aid which is 20 lakhs in INR. I believe that I can regain this amount within two years of working in India and I also believe that my parents are sufficiently financially secure. I always have my parents savings to bank upon.

Longest 30 seconds of my life while Ms. Curly Hair types away into her screen....

VO: Your VISA has been approved and your passport will be couriered within 5 to 7 days...

Me: Thank you very much Ma'am *Almost running out of the consulate to tell my dad*

Interview 4:

Me: Gm maam

VO: GM(no expression), So ur goin 2 TAMU.....y?

Me: To complete my master's in MIS

VO: Y TAMU?

Me: Course structure blends with my interests and great faculty along with amazing brand name.

VO (impressed): When did u complete your UG?

Me: In 2009

VO: Which stream?

Me: EXTC

VO: Any backlogs?

Me: yes...I had backlogs but cleared them a long time back (Hoping against hope that the next obvious question would not be asked)

VO: How many backlogs?

Me: 3 (Ouch)

VO (Not so impressed now): Reason for the backlogs?

Me: (I was just speaking.....I really dont remeber what.....It went like) I got a KT first and got the other 1 while trying to clear the 1st KT and got the 3rd KT trying to clear the 2nd (But all this was said with a lot of confidence :).).....and a meaningless smile across my face).

VO: What was you undergrad percentage?

Me: 57.2

VO (Nodding her head): Any other universities you applied to?

Me: Named all the other univs and the other admits.

VO (Now she appeared impressed again): So y TAMU and not the other Univs in the list?

Me: Repeated the same answer as to how the course is great, and the university has a great reputation.

VO: How much did you score in GRE?

Me: 1410 maam and explained the sectional marks.

VO: How do plan to fund your education?

Me: Parent have saved enough and told her my savings bank details.

VO: Where does you father work?

Me: Told

VO: Annual income?

Me: Told

VO: Your Visa has been accepted and you will get in in 5 days.

Me: Thank you maam (For the first time with a genuine heartfelt smile :))

Chennai

Interview 1

Me - Good Morning Sir....(Passed on My docs)

VO – Good Morning

Me – Smiled Back...(Looked through my I20, GRE and TOEFL Scorecard)

VO - Why US?

Me - I want to study Masters in Management in Information Systems at Texas A&M

VO - Why you want to do Masters, sir?

Me – Sir, three years of work ex has given me good technical and functional exposure. Now want to understand the Management side of the Business.

VO – When did you graduate, sir?

Me – 2008, Sir

VO- How many Backlogs?

Me – 0

VO - Who is funding your education?

Me - Parents

VO - What do they do

ME - Answered that

VO - Sir your visa is issued and you would be getting your Visa in week's time.

Me - Thank u sir

Interview 2

Me: Good morning Sir, how are you ?

Officer: I'm good, how are you ?

Me: I'm good.

Officer: So why Texas A&M ?

Me: A & M consistently scores among the top in ranking in United States. A course work that was resonant with my career objective and a good balance between the cost of the program and the education imparted.

Officer: Okay

Followed by usual questions like:

Any other colleges you applied?

Which course?

How you are planning to pay for it?

What do your parents do ?

Officer: I'm approving your Visa ..(I could not follow the rest)

Me: Thank You.

Interview 3

Me: Hello sir, How r u?

VO: very well. how abt u?

Me: doin fine sir.

VO: Y do u want to go the US?

Me: to purse MIS in TAMU. (explained abt the course like its a techno managerial course etc).

VO: you have work exp?

Me: yes sir. about 3 yrs in IT industry.

VO: Can i look at your college marksheets?

Me: Sure. [Gave Him] (glanced through it. meanwhile, i was just mentioning that i had a first class with distinction and no backlogs)

VO: Who is sponsoring ur studies?

Me: parents and myself. Told them they hav been earning for 20 yrs and myself for 3 years.

VO: So u have been to australia?

Me: Yes sir. I was sent from XYZ company to develop a module for an Australian client. In fact, I was in sydney same time last year.

VO: Congrats! You have been issued a visa!

Interview 4:

VO : So how many univ did u apply to?

Me : told them the names

VO: How many admits and to which univs?

Me : told them

VO : Why ths univ?

Me : Told them good reputation, course structure, good faculty-student ratio.

VO : he was smiling and said that is a regular answer. Now tell me why actually do u want to go to ths unis?

ME: my aim is to bcome B.A. and the course structure will help me in achieving my aim. Told him names of 2-3 courses.

VO: Ok. are u currently working?

ME : yes

VO : since when?

ME : from past 2 yrs

VO : where?

ME : told them

VO : do u plan to join back the company?

ME : yes sir

VO : do u hav the offer?

ME : Actually they said I can join back the company once you return after completing the graduation. I may also join as a B.A. to other companies as well (named a couple).

VO: Ok, ur Visa is approved.

Me : Thank u sir. (a sigh of relief)

Interview 5:

Got docs checked and finger prints done by 7:45 went to VI building... saw my token no. in the monitor and went to that counter... VO was an american lady in late 20's she was on an approval spree... approved 3 visas b4 mine...

VO: Good Morning

me: Good Morning :) how are you

VO: fine... and u ?

me: i am fine too.. thanks for asking :)

VO: why USA ?

me: told

VO: what r d admits u got ?

me: told

VO: why tamu?

me: spoke abt tech + business coursework and abt my work exp in logistics domain and abt profs research in tat area...

VO: pass me ur marksheets

Me: gave... (was worried at this point tat she may look at my backlogs had 2 in 2nd year but she did not :))

VO: wen did u graduate?

me: 2009

VO : wat have u been doin since ?

me working as a programmer analyst in cts since

VO: how r u gonna sponsor ?

me: told abt dad's business, turnover and savings, loan... asked her if she wud like to see my docs... she refused politely...

then she asked me abt my dad's business and later said ur visa is approved... please travel wit max of 30 days from course start date...

thanked her and came out...