

# Ace The AT Interview

## A Game Plan to Get The Job!

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Athletic Trainer Eastern High School, Voorhees NJ  
Adjunct Instructor, Rowan University  
Business Owner, ATGenius LLC



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## My Story

- First AT Job: Glen Mills School, PA
  - Court-appointed youth
  - Students lived there
  - Sports required
- Eastern High School, NJ
  - Large Group IV School
  - Successful athletics




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## Pre-Game

- Research the school or company
  - Know what sports they have, successful programs, mascot
- Rehearse answers to common questions out loud
  - 'So, tell us about yourself...'
- Prepare intelligent questions yourself
- You don't have to be perfect, just be yourself



Take time to learn about the school or company in advance!

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## Pre-Game

- Can you?
  - Summarize your experiences, qualifications and skills in 30 seconds?
  - Explain how you deal with difficult problems?
  - Articulate your treatment philosophy?



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## Game Day

- Dress professionally and conservative
- Arrive early
  - Wait in your car until 5-10 minutes before your time
- Confident body language
- Listen to questions carefully
- Be mindful of rambling
- Positive energy
- Leave a leave-behind

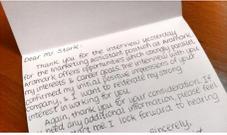


Use a firm handshake and good eye contact!

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## Post-Game

- Send a Thank You note(s) within 24 hours
  - Express enthusiasm for the position
  - Include specifics from the interview
- If you quickly find something else, let them know
- Ghosted: some don't tell you if it's a no



I enjoyed our discussion about...



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## OT: The Second Interview

- Why should we hire you?
- Salary: see if they bring it up first
  - Preseason, holidays, weekends, extra hours
  - Benefits
- Expectations

*Research salaries in comparable schools or companies in advance. Ask your mentors!*



**Asking Salary in an Interview:  
How and When to Ask**

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## Tips from the Other Side of the Table



Mike Beirao, Cherry Hill East and West High Schools Athletic Director



- Show good energy in your body language and answers
- Highlight how you would be a benefit to the athletic department
  - Be self-sufficient. No one wants to hire someone that is going to make more work for an already resource-stressed department.
- Do your research on the school and athletic department!
  - Ask specific questions that only someone who did their research would be prepared to ask.
  - Ask about the future goals of the department and how the AD envisions the AT position in 5 years.
- Finally--Don't be negative. Don't talk badly about bosses or other schools.



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## Sample Interview Questions: The Basics

- Tell us about yourself
- What are your greatest accomplishments?
- What do you expect your role to be here in our athletics program?
- Tell us about a time you failed
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?




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## Deeper Interview Questions: Let's get into the weeds



- **AT-Specific**
  - Tell us what you know about the state concussion policy guidelines.
  - How would athletes or coaches who have worked with you describe you?
  - How would you handle a coach who is hiding an injury to one of their players from you?
  - How would you go about establishing credibility and trust among the athletes, coaches and parents here?
- **Non AT-Specific**
  - What's the last book you've read?
  - What was the hardest thing in life so far that you've had to overcome and what did you learn from it?

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## Sample Interview Questions: More Weeds

- Are you familiar with heat illness prevention and treatment protocols?
- How do you prepare for on-field emergencies?
- Describe would you handle injury documentation here?
- Have you experienced any athlete, parent or coach conflicts and if so how did you handle it?
- Was there a person in your education so far that really made a difference?
- Would you consider a coach's input in making a RTP decision?
- Are you familiar with the NJ Athletic Trainer's Practice Act?



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## Sample Interview Questions



Dave Cillan, MS, ATC, LAT  
Long-time athletic trainer at Ewing High School  
Korey Stringer Institute  
Former ATSNJ President

- Tell us about your journey in athletic training and what drew you to this field.
  - **Background, motivation, career goals, interest**
- Describe how you'd handle an athlete showing signs of exertional rhabdomyolysis during practice.
  - **Injury evaluation, emergency skills**
- How do you handle disagreements with a coach regarding an athlete's playing status?
  - **Conflict resolution, teamwork, communication**
- You suspect a player is hiding an injury before a playoff game — how do you approach that?
  - **Professionalism, ethics, leadership**

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### From a School Superintendent

- Secure a copy of the job description. This may help you develop some interview questions.
- Be prepared to discuss how your education and experience qualify you for the job.
- When responding to a question, make contact with all interview committee members, not just the person who asked the question.
- Responses should be clear and concise. Do not ramble.



Dr. Harold Melleby,  
Former Eastern High  
School Superintendent



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### From a School Superintendent

- If you believe by facial expressions you have not adequately answered the question...
  - You may ask "Have I answered your question?"
  - Only do this sparingly
- Do not take notes or record anything.
- If you are asked if you have any questions...
  - Do not ask more than one or two questions
  - Do not ask about salary in the first interview
- After the interview...
  - Send brief, written communication
    - Express appreciation
    - "...would welcome the opportunity to become a member of the school district staff."



Dr. Harold Melleby,  
Former Eastern High  
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### Mock Interview

- 10-15 minutes with a partner
- Select 5-8 questions
- Use the scoresheet
- Get into character



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### From an Athletic Trainer

- Present yourself humbly confident and likable
- Highlight ownership of clinical situations and decisions
- Have 2 professional outfits
- Most interviews are by AD who may not completely understand the AT's role
  - Practice concise answers on what you can do and how you do it well
- Do not ask interviewers to critique your performance
- An interview is not a forum to make speeches
  - About politics, lifestyle, religion
  - Remain neutral and professional



Kip Patterson, ATC  
Shawnee High School



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### Get Your Credentials Together

- BOC Certification
  - State Licensure
    - Must be renewed every 2 years
- NJ Department of Education Athletic Trainer Certificate
- CPR/AED Certification
- Ask a preceptor to do a mock interview



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### Thank you for attending!



*I got the job!*

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