

Here are some tips for the coop board interview. . .

- Being invited to the interview is a good sign. The interview is the board's opportunity to meet you and ask specific questions about your application. The style of the interview can range from an informal gathering of board members in an apartment to a formal interview with board members lined up at a table with you in the 'hot' seat.
- Dress-up and be prompt. In terms of dress and promptness only, a board interview should be treated no differently than a professional job interview.
- Prepare for a lack of privacy. The board has great latitude in the kinds of questions it can ask. Be prepared for this and do not avoid answering personal questions or be angered by this intrusion unless they are Fair Housing/NYC Human Rights violations. The NYC Human Rights Law prohibits housing discrimination in New York City based on a person's real or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, creed, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, partnership status, alienage or citizenship status, age, lawful occupation or because children may be or will be residing with you.
- Know your application. You should be able to quickly and concisely answer any questions asked regarding your application without referring to the actual document. However, if necessary, bring along a copy and subtly refer to it if and when needed.
- Unlike a job interview, do not try to sell yourself. Only answer questions asked and let the board run the show. Boards rarely turn down applicants for being too boring.
- Never volunteer information or engage in unsolicited conversations except for basic cordial remarks and greetings.
- Do not ask questions. Questions can sometimes unintentionally convey negative information. For example: "Do you have any plans to renovate the lobby?" is a seemingly innocent question. But imagine the reaction of the co-op board member who was in charge of the last lobby renovation.
- A short interview is better than a long one. While there are no hard and fast rules, a short cordial interview with a few board questions and remarks is often the best co-op board interview. A long interview may signify that board members are not fully satisfied with the information supplied in the board package.
- Do not discuss extensive apartment renovations. It's okay to say that you're interested in repainting your new home or that you would like to buff the floors. But anything else--like a major re-do to the kitchen or the bathroom--is a red flag for most co-op board members, who will probably envision months of noisy, dusty construction work with laborers traipsing in and out of the building. Again, the less said, the better.
- Do not expect an answer at the end of the meeting. Most boards do not give their decision until a day or two after the meeting.