



VISA INFORMATION

Ten Points to Remember When Applying for a Nonimmigrant Visa

1. Ties to Home Country

You must be able to show that you have reasons for returning to your country. “Ties” to your home country are things that attach you to your hometown, such as, a job, family, land ownership, inheritance, investments, etc. A consular officer might ask about your family relationships, specific long-term plans and career possibilities in your home country after graduation.

2. Employment

Your main purpose for coming to the United States should be to study, not for work. While many students do work during their studies, such employment is secondary to their main purpose of studying. You must be able to clearly express your plan to return home at the end of your program. If your spouse and/or dependants are planning to accompany you on a F-2 visa, be aware that F-2 dependents cannot, under any circumstances, be employed in the United States. If asked, be prepared to address what your spouse and/or dependents intend to do with their time while in the United States.

3. English

Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language. We suggest that you practice English conversations with a native English speaker before your interview. If you are coming to the United States solely to study intensive English, be prepared to explain how studying English will be useful to you in your home country.

4. Speak for Yourself

Do not bring parents, family members or friends with you to the interview. The consular officer wants to interview you. A negative impression is created if you are not prepared to speak for yourself.

5. Know Your Program and How it Fits Your Future Career Plans

If you are not able to communicate the reasons you wish to pursue a particular program of study in the United States, you may not succeed in obtaining a visa. You should be able to explain how studying and working in the United States will help your career goals upon returning to your home country.

6. Be Concise

Consular officers must conduct quick and efficient interviews. Therefore, they may make a decision on the impressions they form in the first moments of the interview. As a result, what you say and the initial impression you create are critical to your success in obtaining a visa. Keep your answers to the officer’s questions short and to the point.

7. Supplemental Documentation

Any documents presented to a consular officer should be written in short and concise statements. Lengthy written explanations cannot be quickly read or evaluated and therefore may be disregarded. Remember that you will have 2-3 minutes of interview time, if you're lucky.

8. Not All Countries Are Treated Equally

Applicants from countries suffering economic problems or from countries where many students have remained in the United States as immigrants will have more difficulty getting visas. Statistically, applicants from those countries are more likely to be intending to immigrate to the United States.

9. Dependents Remaining at Home

If your spouse and/or children are remaining behind in your country, be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. If the consular officer believes that your family will require you to send them money from the United States in order to support themselves, your student visa will almost certainly be denied. If your family does decide to join you at a later time, it is helpful to have them apply at the same time when you apply for your visa.

10. Maintain a Positive Attitude

Do not argue with the consular officer. If you are denied a student visa, ask the officer for a list of documents he or she would suggest you bring in order to overcome the refusal, and try to get the reason you were denied in writing.