

THE BASIC INTERVIEW

- Things to help you with the incredibly awkward part of being a journalist.

*“The most difficult thing I do
is getting out of the car.”*

-Jamie Frances, Tampa Bay Times

INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Katie Couric on conducting a good interview:**
 - <http://youtu.be/4eOynrl2eTM?t=10s>
- **What points did she emphasize?**

INTERVIEW TIPS

- ❑ **First, interview more people than what you need. Just because you speak with them, doesn't mean you have to use them.**
- ❑ **Second, use experts as your primary source. There's nothing wrong with interviewing "Average Joe" individuals, but show restraint.**
- ❑ **Finally, you CANNOT have any personal connection to your sources.**

INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Several interview formats are acceptable:**
 - **Telephone (OK)**
 - **Video such as Skype and FaceTime (BETTER)**
 - **Face to face (BEST)**
- **STOP WITH THE EMAIL INTERVIEWS!**

INTERVIEW TIPS

□ Preparation

- Find out how to pronounce names
- Read what's been written before
- Find an interesting point for small talk
- Figure out what you need from the person

□ Making the appointment

- Don't misrepresent yourself
- Use a "sponsor"
- Explain subject and approximate time needed
- Nail down a specific time
- Remember, they are judging you

INTERVIEW TIPS

□ How you look when you're not prepared:

□ <http://youtu.be/fcjinziG-0cl?t=7s>

□ <http://youtu.be/5rt9tFjHaso>

INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Writing your questions**
 - Ask open-ended questions
 - Put them in logical order (easy ones first)
 - Recorder to inside of notebook
 - Use as a guide and checklist
 - Follow the conversation
- **Beginning the interview**
 - Shake hands and make eye contact
 - Engage in small talk
 - Tell them you appreciate their time
 - Ask your first question

INTERVIEW TIPS

- **Conducting the interview**
 - Listen, listen, listen
 - Always ask for examples
 - Prod them to be specific
 - Ask them to repeat what they said
 - To record or not to record . . .
- **Taking notes**
 - Use your own shorthand
 - Try the star system
 - Ask a throwaway question
 - Keep writing

INTERVIEW TIPS

□ The bad interview

- Use an awkward pause
- Ask for real-life examples

□ Asking the hard question

- Acknowledge that it's hard
- Blame your editor
- Blame your readers
- Remember: They probably expect it

INTERVIEW TIPS

□ Winding up the interview

- Stay on time
- Ask if you can call later
- Ask if there's someone else with whom you should speak
- Close your notebook and listen

□ After the interview

- Fill in the blanks in your notes immediately

□ Real people caveat

- Be careful about sources who aren't media-savvy, especially children

INTERVIEW TIPS

▣ Finally the interview so bad, it's good:

▣ http://youtu.be/hzuT_vhcQ7U

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▣ Questions?

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