

Author Directions: Navigating Your Success With Interviews

How to Prepare and Connect with Your Audience



Introduction

Having your book published is quite possibly one of the most exciting moments in your career. After many years of hard work your book is finally in front of your peers and the public. As an author, you may be approached for radio/video interviews. This might seem daunting if you have not taken part in one before, but it is a great opportunity to connect with your audience.

Our resource guide will help you prep for interviews with advice and tips from Taylor & Francis authors well versed in journalism and interviews themselves.

Becoming Interview-ready

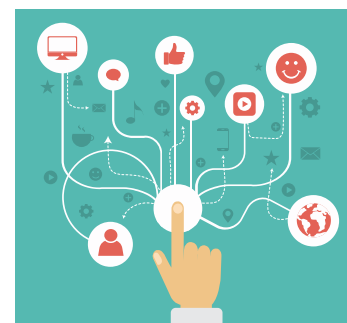
1. Before the Interview: Preparing
2. During the Interview: Do's and Don'ts
3. After the Interview: Discovering Additional Interview Opportunities

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Before the Interview: Preparing

Research

Become familiar with the media outlet that will be hosting you. Jim Beaman author of *Interviewing for Radio*, (2011), recommends you research the publication, radio or TV station in advance by “listening to the programme in which your interview will be featured. Is this a general magazine programme or a specialist one? In other words, who will be listening? This may help you to establish how you present yourself and whether you can use jargon that will be understood. Listen to the regular presenter of the programme and your interviewer if they are not the same person. You should be able to assess their personality, demeanour and approach”.



Asking Questions

Once you have established your audience and the angle of your interviewer, it is time to focus on what you will be saying. Emma Lee-Potter author of *Interviewing for Journalists*, (2017), suggests: “**Ask** for questions in advance. You may not always get these, but some journalists are happy to give an idea of the types of questions they plan to ask”.

Beaman reminds us that it is important to “**Ask** if the interview will be live or pre-recorded – this will establish if the interview may be edited before transmission. Will the interview be face-to-face in the studio or down the line from a satellite studio or on the telephone or Skyped or on-location? **Ask** if others will be taking part in the same interview – they may be there to voice a different opinion to yours. Will there be a phone-in element where you may have to answer questions from the listeners?”



The format of the interview is important to know because each style comes with different concerns.

For video interviews you should bear in mind your appearance, which we suggest business casual so that you're comfortable while delivering answers. For live interviews, radio or TV, be aware to pace your answers according to the time allocated. Pre-recorded interviews have more space for rephrasing, while live interviews with callers have more space for spontaneity.

Most importantly though, Lee-Potter says you should *“Ask yourself what **you** want the interview to convey and then make sure you cover those key points. If the interviewer is likely to ask for specific examples to illustrate your point, it's much easier if you've prepared your thoughts and ideas in advance. In other words, have your best answers and stories at the ready.”*

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During the Interview: Do's and Don'ts

You're familiar with the media outlet and the interviewer, you know what you want to convey, now all you have to do is say it ... but how?

Beaman and Lee-Potter provide concise advice that will help you navigate past the nerves:

Do's

- ✓ Know your subject matter well and make sure you promote your book.
- ✓ Stay relaxed, focused, animated and confident.
- ✓ Use straightforward language (avoid too many acronyms and too much jargon).
- ✓ Be clear, concise and compelling.
- ✓ Use the interviewer's name, but not too often.
- ✓ Be yourself.
- ✓ Try to enjoy the experience.

Don'ts

- ✗ Don't read your answers from a script.
- ✗ Don't make your answers too complicated or convoluted. Time may be short, so you want to make the best use of it.
- ✗ Don't expect the interviewer to have done more than scan your book – the basic questions may have been prepared by a researcher with the interviewer.
- ✗ Don't expect to have more than a few words with the interviewer before the actual interview begins.
- ✗ Don't be afraid to be honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so.
- ✗ Don't always be on your best behaviour – feel free to smile if appropriate, challenge when you disagree, correct when you need to and interrupt politely if you want to get a point across and time is limited.



After the Interview: Discovering Additional Interview Opportunities

Promote the Interview

The hard work is over, now it is time to show off your efforts. If you have a social media presence, don't forget to tag the media outlet page if they have one. When sharing the interview details, try to make it as visually appealing as possible. You can add the book cover, a still image from the interview, or even a headshot. Also, try to lead the audience back to the book product page so that it is easy for the listener to know where to purchase the book you are highlighting.

If you are new to using social media or need some tips read our free resource '*Navigating your success in Social Media: 5 Key Tips for Authors Using Social Media*'.

Let your editorial contacts at your publisher know about the interview as well. Don't forget to include the link and media details when sharing. This will allow your publisher to promote it to their audience on social media for your books subject and reach an even wider audience.



On to the Next

The best way to master the art of interviewing is to continue doing it! Your interview will likely create traction and can lead to follow up interviews, but don't be afraid to ask your interviewer for referrals. Even if they don't personally connect you, they can provide suggestions for other media outlets to approach.

Lee-Potter says to continue to "research the key publications, radio and TV stations that cover your area of expertise. Follow journalists who cover your area of expertise on social media. Journalists often ask for information on Twitter using the hashtag **#journorequest** so it's worth keeping an eye out for these."

Reach out and make yourself receptive to interview offers. Beaman points out that there are "national, regional, local, community and internet radio stations, plus podcasters all looking for content via interviewees. All have listeners so make sure they know you are available, willing and able to contribute to their output. Listen out to phone-in programmes and call in if the subject under discussion is your area of expertise – you will get your voice heard and hopefully a plug for the book".

Conclusion

Radio/Video interviews are a special way to connect with your audience. When the audience hears your ideas in your own voice, it becomes easier to connect with your book content. You also get the opportunity to turn listeners into readers.

It may not always be easy to talk in front of the camera or microphone, but sharing your expertise is well worth it!

Acknowledgements

While researching this snapshot's topic, we turned to Jim Beaman author of *Interviewing for Radio* and Emma Lee-Potter author of *Interviewing for Journalists*, for advice and guidance based on their professional experience.

We are grateful to these contributors for taking the time to be interviewed and for sharing their knowledge with our audience.

Illustrations by Makyzz / Freepik.

Interviews

Jim Beaman (April 25, 2019), Email Interview.

Emma Lee-Potter (April 25, 2019), Email Interview.

References



Interviewing for Radio Jim Beaman

ISBN: 9780415561709

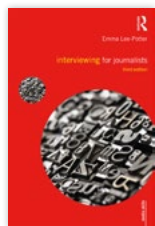
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