

TEN TIPS FOR INTERVIEWERS

1. Choose a quiet locale and properly position your microphone(s).
2. Ask one question at a time. State your questions as directly as possible.
3. Ask open-ended questions—questions that begin with “why, how, where, what kind of,” etc. Avoid yes or no questions.
4. Start with non-controversial questions. One good place to begin, for instance, is with the interviewee’s childhood memories.
5. Understand that periods of silence will occur. These are useful periods of reflection and recollection for your interviewee.
6. Avoid interrupting the interviewee.
7. If the interviewee strays away from the topic in which you are interested, don’t panic. Sometimes the best parts of the interview come about this way. If you feel the digression has gone too far afield, gently steer the interviewee back to the topic with your next question.
8. Be respectful of the interviewee. Use body language to show you are interested in what he or she has to say. Remember, the interviewee is giving you the gift of his or her memories and experiences.
9. After the interview, thank the interviewee for sharing his or her experiences. Also send a written thank-you note.
10. Don’t use the interview to show off your knowledge, charm, or other attributes. Remember, good interviewers never shine—only their interviews do.

BONUS TIP: Read and listen to these recording problem tips from NPR:

<http://training.npr.org/audio/the-ear-training-guide-for-audio-producers/#recording>