

10 TIPS FOR INTERVIEWEES

Rule Number One in all circumstances is to be yourself.

Rule Number Two is to be appropriate to the particular circumstances in which you are placed.

Rule Number Three is to be yourself.

Best practice paper

This document is designed to provide a quick check list reminder of key points for being interviewed by media - particularly broadcast media.

Full media training and specific rehearsal coaching are two aspects of the comprehensive range of services provided to clients by PIELLE Consulting as part of our fundamental professional role.

Helping you to protect and promote your reputation and that of your organisation.

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With the proliferation of broadcast media in the UK, and the growing use of audio and video presentations for internal and external communication, personal skill in presenting oneself and representing one's organisation is of increasing significance.

The ten tips identified in this document are a quick checklist to remind and reassure those who are likely to face a microphone – with or without a camera.

Always take those opportunities seriously by preparing yourself thoroughly, using your professional public relations advisors to help you meet your own and the media's requirements.

1. **Before agreeing** to an interview make sure you know what programme it is for and exactly and what they want to talk to you about.
2. **Ask how long** the interview will take and how much they plan to use. To get a realistic estimate find out how long the final item is likely to be. Find out who else is to be interviewed.
3. **Check** with your professional public relations advisors before confirming your participation. It may in some cases be better to negotiate a live interview. In others, a statement may be advisable or even not participating at all. Do not be afraid of the threat of "the empty chair".
4. **Decide on the number of points** you want to get over in the interview and reduce them by half. One or at the most two points are as much as you can hope to communicate in a news type interview.

5. **Never start an answer with** "There are three points to this..." and slowly go through them. An ideal answer has a headline in the first sentence, such as: "There is no one in Europe who has a better safety record..."
6. **Remember what the producer wants** is not blood on the floor but a lively, vigorous piece of television or radio. If you volunteer interesting information and comment it will be used, but keep the answers short. All answers should be between 25-40 seconds. You may find it helpful to tape record the interview for checking later.
7. **Before the interview** starts make sure you are comfortable and, for television, that you are happy with your appearance: hair combed, tie, collar or neckline straight, jacket and collar down and not bulging. The camera will rarely go wider than breast pocket so facial details are very important. Sit so that you are leaning slightly forward as if you want to contribute. Don't lean back. It looks patronising and too relaxed. Only look at the interviewer: if you look at the camera or elsewhere, you will appear shifty. In general, don't use the interviewer's name.
8. **Never say to yourself** "I'll have this point for later". Say it right away, you will never have the opportunity later. If you do, say it again.
9. **If you don't know the answer,** don't waffle - it shows.
10. **Remember that you know more** about the subject than the interviewer will ever know. Also remember that while you may be nervous, so too is the interviewer.