



Being recognized as an expert in your field not only gives you recognition for your knowledge, talents and skills, but also gives you a way to teach the public about the topics that you are passionate about. In order to do this, you need to become media-savvy. If you can be dazzling in a media interview, and then learn how to follow up, your opportunities to step into the spotlight will multiply.

Last month, we covered ways to get interviewed. This month we'll go over the steps you'll need to take to give a dynamic interview.

#### Preparing for a Potential Interview

Have the following checklist ready when the phone rings with a request for a broadcast or magazine interview. Usually the journalist or producer or host of the show is making quite a few calls to potential guests and will be in a big hurry. They will typically speak quickly, so if you can shoot off your questions and requests quickly, they will appreciate it. Do not expect to gab. You may want to make a copy of this list and keep it by the phone or on your computer. In the event that you receive a call asking you to go on the air immediately, do not accept the offer unless you are a very experienced interviewer. Otherwise, you could end up looking like less than an expert and it could hurt, rather than help, your chances of getting future interviews.

Here are the critical questions you should ask for a radio interview or Web cast.

1. What time is the interview, and what time will you call?
2. What is the topic, and what do you hope to find out?
3. Will you call live on the air, or will there be a wait?
4. Approximately how long will the interview be?
5. Do you typically run on time?
6. Who else will be interviewed (or has been interviewed) on this topic on your show?

In addition to the above critical questions, you need to make a few requests so that the interview goes as smoothly as possible and is a success for them and you:

1. Request that they e-mail you confirmation of the interview, including the time the interview will start and as other details.
2. Give them your phone number and an emergency back-up number.
3. Have them e-mail you the station call letters, numbers and the name of the show as well as the contact's name, phone number and address
4. Tell them how you would like to be introduced to the listeners, and request that they announce your Web site address for further information.
5. Tell them if you have a book (offer to send one), or an event, product or service particularly applicable to their audience.
6. Tell them if you have other interviews or obligations near the show time so they will get you on and off in a timely manner.
7. Ask if they have a Web site. If so, suggest they link their Web site to yours and tell the listeners about the link.
8. Request that they mail you a tape of the show. Often, you'll be told that tape requests must be made separately to someone else at the station. If so, be prepared to give the station name, call letters, time slot of the show and your start time. This will give you a record of what is said. In addition, you can sometimes use the recording for future promotion. However, this is illegal unless you've received written permission from the station. It's rare that your request would be turned down, but keep in mind that 99 percent of stations will NOT grant permission to sell the interview as a product.
9. Ask them to confirm these requests via e-mail. In addition, request their e-mail address, then confirm everything on your end via e-mail. That way, you'll have all the necessary information in print, and you have all their contact

information in case you want to contact them again with story or show ideas in the future.

You should ask the critical questions in your first phone call, but the following questions can be addressed later via e-mail:

1. What kind of show is it (news, comedy, entertainment)?
2. How many people does it reach?
3. What is the market (city or cities)?
4. What is the editorial slant (conservative, liberal, controversial)?
5. Who is the interviewer and what does (s)he prefer to be called?
6. How familiar is the interviewer with your topic?
7. Would they like any other information about you? You can give them your web site address or, in lieu of that, e-mail or fax them information.
8. Let them know you maintain a list of questions past audiences have asked and find out if they would like to see the list. Many times, the host will appreciate the courtesy, especially if the interview is about your book. Be aware, however, that sometimes the interviewer may consider this gesture pushy. Play it by ear, making the offer only when you believe it will be well received.
9. If you have a book, product or service that you can offer for free, ask them if they would like to give it away to callers during your interview or perhaps later as a contest prize. I sometimes offer a free hour of my time to a contest winner, which includes an analysis of their body language for interviews, or a public speaking coaching session. The station gets a great "give-away" prize, and I get to let listeners know I coach as well as speak.

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