

REPORTING CHECKLIST

Are you ready to find the story?

preparedness. patience. persistence.

WHO ARE THE INTERVIEW SUBJECTS?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

WHY THEM? *What's their story? When you request an interview, clearly identify the reason for it.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

VERIFICATION & ACCURACY

TUFF FORMULA - *A worthy ideal for the conscientious reporter*

TRUTHFUL

- Serves 'the right to know'
- Seeks and reports the truth
- Full disclosure reporting
- Loyal to the story itself
- Still has the source in mind



UNBIASED

- Going behind the veil
- Consequentialist
- Integrity to the story
- Professional attitude toward the story

FULL

- Comprehensive storytelling
- All sides / all sources
- Nobody can say everything about anything
- Respect for the how the story will be received

FAIR

- One foot in each camp
- Truth-oriented & consequentialist
- A desire to discover & tell the truth
- An eagerness to inform & educate your audience

THE TOOLS

Being prepared for interviews means having the right tools. Check them out early. Make sure they are ready to go. Be prepared so you can be in the moment and not worry about the small stuff.

- Reporter's Notebook
- Pen & backup pen
- Audio recorder
- Questions
- Research
- Camera
- Video camera
- Smile & Ears



All Charged up?

THE INTERVIEW

PREPARE. ASK. LISTEN. CONVERSE. LISTEN.



Where will the interview take place? Go where the source is comfortable. Somewhere quiet and alone. Talk to them within the setting of the story, if possible. Get the environmental portrait. Talk about what's in the room.

Introduce yourself & shake hands. Use Miss | Ms. | Mrs. | Dr... Be formal in your introduction. Thank them and remind them what you are writing about and who you are reporting for.

Hold eye contact. Be curious and genuine. Remember, they are taking time out of their busy schedule to talk with you.

Plan red & green light questions, but be prepared to ask new ones. Let the source tell their story. Follow the story by asking follow-up questions.

Make sure to verify: names, ages, titles, qualifiers, places for accuracy and spelling

THE RESEARCH

Be 'in the know'. Be prepared by knowing your subject & your topic. Document & bookmark everything you find.

- Bios / Resumes
- Press / Articles
- Topic history
- Statistics
- Previous pub stories
- Records
- Current pulse on topic
- Pre-interview
- Talk to People
- Meeting minutes
- Family / Friends
- Social Media

If you have not educated yourself about the subject, a source will view you as an ill-prepared reporter. Now, that does not mean you need to have all the answers before the interview begins. The source will provide much of the information for the story, but an educated reporter shows he or she cares about the subject and has a general understanding of the subject matter.

THE FOLLOW UP

What you do directly after the interview & the following day will be key to the success of your storytelling.

- Backup
- Transcribe
- Follow-up
- Verify
- Thank

PLANNING THE QUESTIONS

Ask a variety of objective and subjective questions. Plan red-light, or objective (close-ended) questions to gain relevant, interesting facts & figures. But also plan plenty of green-light, or subjective (open-ended) questions to get the feelings and to capture personal stories and emotions.

Above all: be ready to adapt on the fly. Use your questions as an outline, a guide. If you are prepared, the interview can be a conversation. Conversations solicit storytelling, Q & A sessions don't.

Key phrases: Why did you feel that way? Think that? Why? Why? Why? | Tell me more about... | Take me through | What was that like? | You talked about _____, tell me more about that. | Describe... | How did ... |

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The Story: _____

Reporter's Name: _____