

# Television Production & Broadcast Journalism

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Second Edition



*PowerPoint Presentations for*

## Television Production & Broadcast Journalism

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11 | Interviews

# Objectives

- Explain the purpose of gathering background before an interview.
- Create interview questions and topics based on background research.
- Identify the differences between shooting an interview that is aired live and shooting an interview that will be edited into a package story.
- Explain the function of B-roll.
- Recognize effective techniques for conducting an interview.

# Types of Interviews



- Man-on-the-street interview
  - Requires little prep
  - Often light-hearted
- In-depth interview
  - Serious topic
  - Much preparation to be successful

# Preparing for Interview



- Conduct background research
  - Topic
  - Interviewee

# Purpose of Research



- Reporter needs to understand issue
- Reporter needs to be conversant about topic
- Reporter needs to know some bio on interviewee
- All contribute to formulation of interview questions that are focused on topic

# Technical Jargon



- Interview fails if audience cannot understand interviewee
- When used by interviewee, reporter must prompt interviewee for an explanation or “translate” for audience

# Interview Questions



- Reporter's goal is to get interviewee to talk and provide majority of information
- Phrase questions to prompt interviewee to speak in sentences, not just few words
- Research will help reporter anticipate responses that result in usable sound bites



# Preparing Questions in Advance



- Helps to focus reporter's thoughts
- Helps to frame interview in logical progression
- May help to save stalled interview if conversation lags
- Place questions on note cards or on clipboard

# Preparing Questions in Advance (Cont.)



- Prepared questions are NOT SET IN STONE!!!
- Reporter is free to ask any question that might come up during interview
- Reporter may allow conversation to veer in new direction at any time during interview
- Reduce each question to just 3-5 words

# Question Formulations



- Prediction: ask interviewee to future focus
  - “What will probably be the next step?”
- Opinion: ask interviewee to offer opinion
  - “How do you feel about...?”
- Narration: ask interviewee to tell story
  - “Tell me just how this happened.”

# Scheduling Interview



- Using phone is usually best method
- Persistence may be necessary
- Leaving messages is not recommended
- Attempt to find mutually-convenient time and place to conduct interview
- Always be professional and polite
- Never “ambush” in public if you want friendly interview

# On Location



- Provide adequate lighting
- Ensure adequate audio
  - How many mics will be necessary
  - Wired/wireless
  - Lapel or hand-held
  - How to connect efficiently to camera

# Discussion

Discuss various “effects” of differing types of shots for interview.

# Lead Information Recorded First



- Interviewee states name
- Interviewee spells name
- Interviewee states title (if pertinent to story)
- Interviewee states contact information for future follow-up

# Purpose of Lead



- To provide important information for reporter to use to write story
- Interviewee will use normal speaking voice since interviewee is in close proximity
- All this provides natural audio level for photog to balance sound for interview



# Getting Audio Level



- To balance interviewee's voice, NEVER say:
  - "say something"
  - "count to 10"
  - "say, test, one, two"
- All will cause interviewee to speak at higher-than-normal pitch, making exercise worthless!

# B-Roll



- Always shoot B-roll immediately after interview
- Always shoot at least three times amount of B-roll you think you might need
- Having to reuse B-roll is considered extremely unprofessional

# Placing Talent at Ease



- Make small talk with interviewee while equipment is being set up
- Answer questions interviewee might have
- Begin interview with easy questions
- Be extremely friendly and helpful

# Asking Questions



- Interview should “feel” like it is conversation, not interrogation
- Questions should be neutral, not “loaded”
- Interviewee should not have any idea of reporter’s opinion about topic other than mere interest
- To make editing easier, reporter should pause after each answer and never interrupt the interviewee

# Asking Questions (Cont.)



- If reporter remains quiet, interviewee will sense “silence” and continue to talk
- Repeat question if interviewee does not answer it
- Near end of interview, reporter asks if there is anything else interviewee would like to add or clarify

# Body Language



- Always maintain eye contact with interviewee
- Glance at notes only between questions
- Reporter should provide positive feedback to interviewee while interviewee is speaking
  - Nod
  - Smile

# Career Page

- Poynter News University contains information and online courses for young journalists to increase their understanding and skills in journalism world. Majority of courses are free.
- [www.newsU.org](http://www.newsU.org)

# Review Question

How should reporter prepare for interview?

Research subject so reporter can anticipate responses, prepare questions in advance that prompt interviewee to speak in sentences rather than a few words, place questions on note cards if necessary, re-write questions to have as few words as possible.



# Review Question

What are the two ways to air interviews?

1. Aired live, unedited, and in their entirety
2. Edited in post-production

# Review Question

What is B-roll and how should it be shot?

Video or sound related to topic. Should be shot immediately after interview, and with at least three times more footage than you will need.

## Review Question

Why is it important for a reporter to gather background before conducting an interview?

It shows interviewee that reporter has knowledge about the subject, and can have intelligent exchange with the interviewee about the subject.

# Review Question

What techniques should you use while conducting an interview?

- Make interviewee feel comfortable and relaxed
- Nod and smile at interviewee
- Do not look at index cards during response
- Ask questions that don't reveal your feelings
- Report, don't judge

# Glossary

- **background:** All the information gathered through research prior to conducting an interview.
- **B-roll:** Footage that includes shots of anything visual mentioned during the interview or that is related to the topic, and any natural sound associated with the story.

# Glossary

- **lead:** Basic information provided by the interviewee that is recorded at the beginning of every interview. The lead typically includes the interviewee's name and proper spelling, title (if pertinent and applicable), and contact information.