



community
mediatraining
organisation

Interviewing

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Purpose of Interviews

- ▶ To get information
- ▶ To explain things 'better', more clearly or a point of view
- ▶ To hold people to account
- ▶ To unwrap/ discover new things
- ▶ To describe what they can see, hear, or doing/ have done

The Great Barrier Reef experience.....



Or we could get more into it....



Or perhaps...






From the outset....

1. What's the story? Be clear in your own mind, for your reader
2. What's most important?
3. What's the AIM of THIS interview? With THIS person.
4. A combination of these factors will help us determine who to interview and what we need to ask them

News Values

- Impact
- NOW factor
- Topical
- Local
- Novelty
- Prominence
- Human Interest
- Conflict
- Milestones





Who to interview – ‘talent’ could have

- ◀ Authority
- ◀ Experience
- ◀ Strongly held view
- ◀ New or unique perspective/ idea
- ◀ Be available - for deadline , location etc.
- ◀ Ability to articulate their views
- ◀ Fame, notoriety

Setting Up!

1. Preparation allows
 - a. You – research topic, know your angle, key points, some details
 - b. Guest – focus on topic, consider the angle, what you want from them, their position, memories, details etc
2. Manage expectations – how long will it take, use of material, 'on the record', etc
3. Location – phone, in-person, media event?
4. In the lion's den or neutral ground?





Open and Closed Questions

Open-Ended Questions

- **Open** the conversation: gets people talking
- Uncover **unexpected** stories and insights
- Facilitate **exploration** of a topic
- Used heavily in interviews and **qualitative** usability tests

Closed Questions

- **Close** or **limit** the scope of the conversation
- Uncover **details** or provide **clarification**
- Support **quantification** of responses
- Used heavily in surveys and **quantitative** research

Types of interviews - Information

- ◀ 5 x w's, how and 'what's next?'
- ◀ Examples: Emergency, local police, procedural issues etc
- ◀ Details, facts, information, announcements




Types of interviews - Accountability

- ◀ Some closed questions to establish facts etc
- ◀ Some open questions to obtain explanations
- ◀ Some questions that challenge/ counter (your informed questions)
- ◀ Looking for opinion, reason, explanation, justification



Examples:

- Local Councillor/ mayor
- Coach of team
- Contractor/ developer



Types of interviews – Discovery/ Unwrap

- ◀ Maybe some closed questions
- ◀ Mostly open questions to get a point of view
- ◀ Looking for feelings, memories, thoughts, descriptions, revelations





Open or closed Questions ?

- ◀ Were you shocked by the rates decision?
- ◀ Do you think it's a good development?
- ◀ How will you go about improving the roads?
- ◀ What plans are there to improve recycling?



Which is more (potentially) revealing? (these should be 1 v 2

- ◀ Are you going to improve garbage collections?
- ◀ Did the flood damage your shop?
- ◀ Paul Kelly, the songwriter, must be a big inspiration to you.
- ◀ What is the strategy to improve rubbish services?
- ◀ What was the impact of the flood on your business?
- ◀ Paul Kelly has inspired many songwriters. Tell me who's inspired you?



Questions?

- ◀ Should I write the questions down?
- ◀ Should I give the questions to the talent?
- ◀ Others?

Poor interviews...

- ◀ Don't tell us anything new or advance the story
- ◀ Talent are ill-informed
- ◀ The 'story' or view isn't clear to reader/viewer/listener
- ◀ Are more about interviewer than interviewee



Lastly

- ◀ Be clear about what you want
- ◀ Be polite, but firm. Be in control
- ◀ Remain calm and courteous, even when there are difficult questions
- ◀ Give space to the interviewee to consider and answer
- ◀ You are asking for the 'people', not you. Its not personal

Writing your reef story...

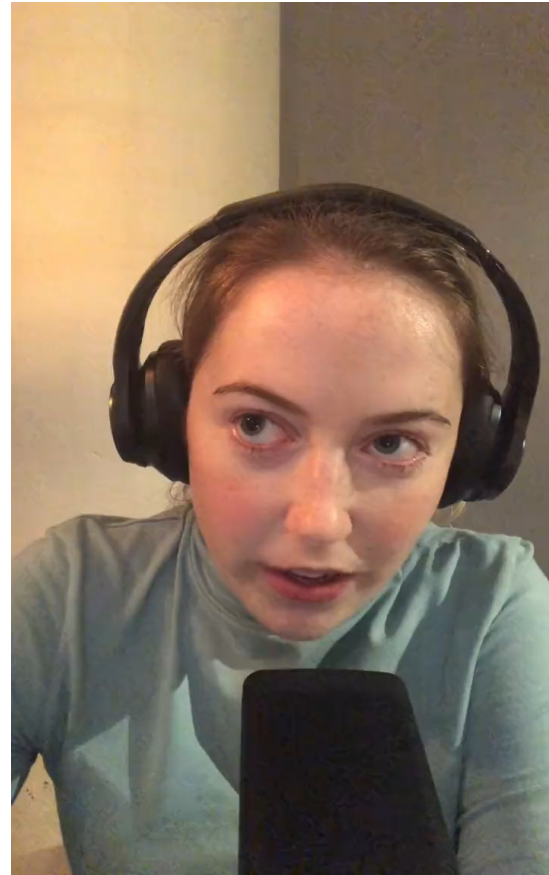
- ◀ What's most important?
- ◀ Be clear – they haven't seen it like you have
- ◀ Make it matter!
- ◀ What's quotable?
- ◀ One idea/ one sentence





Is this where we are heading ?

◀ If we are going the wrong way



Thanks!

Any questions?

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