



**IN THE NEWS**  
*Where News Never Gets Old.*

# **BRAGGING RIGHTS: SHARING YOUR STORY WITH THE PRESS**



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## INTRODUCTION

When you have a newsworthy achievement, it is important to nail the interview with the press. Your interview with reporters, whether it's televised or in print, will influence how people see you and your business. For many people, the interview will form the first solid impression they have of you.

Making the most out of this first impression is important, to say the least.

With a great interview, you can impress people with you and your business' character, energy and drive. A positive interview can generate curiosity and bring customers to your doors as they check out your business to see what the buzz is about.

However, there are a few steps that you need to take in order to get the most out of your interview:

- 1 Make sure the interview is right for you.
- 2 Prepare for the interview ahead of time.
- 3 Get through the actual interview.
- 4 Promote the interview to reach a larger audience after the fact.

Each of the above steps can be further broken down into more detailed tips and instructions, which we will discuss in the following sections.

Read on to learn more about how you can make sure that the interview is right for you or your business...

# DETERMINING WHICH INTERVIEW IS RIGHT FOR YOU

Before agreeing to an interview, it is important to learn a bit about the interviewer and their past work so that you can have an idea of what to expect during an interview. So, the first thing to do before anything else is to determine Which Interview Is Right For You?

## Step 1

### Vet the Interviewer

Before you participate in an interview, it is important to vet the interviewer and the news agency that he or she reports for.

You can often find a lot of important information about reputable news organizations and their reporters online through a simple search. Usually, you can plug either the reporter's name or the name of their news organization into an online search engine and find:

- The news organization's website.
- A list of articles by the interviewer.
- Information about any open libel suits against the interviewer.

However, you may not always be able to find all of the information that you want so easily. Generally speaking, reputable reporters and news entities should have plenty of information about them online, especially if they have been in operation for a long period of time.

If you can't get any information about the person performing the interview and the newspaper, magazine, TV/radio station or other



news entity that they claim to be working for has no information about that reporter, that's a potential red flag right there.

While you're vetting the interviewer, you'll probably run across previous examples of their work. Before you go to your own interview with this person, check out their older work to get an idea of how they conduct their interviews.

What are their favorite types of questions? How many questions does the interviewer ask?

By reviewing an interviewer's previous work, you'll have the answers to the above questions. Being familiar with a given interviewer's style allows you to better prepare for the actual interview, whether it is a laid back question and answer session or a high-intensity panel debate.

Combined with your research into the interviewer's past work, knowing the format of the interview ahead of time can help your preparations for said interview.

For example, is the interview going to be a one-on-one discussion? Will it be carried out in person, over the phone, or via mail?

For a print interview, such as for a newspaper or magazine, a mailed interview is usually more than sufficient. This format is one of the most low-pressure types of interviews possible, as you have plenty of time to formulate your responses and make sure that you can get your point across.

With an over-the-phone interview for broadcast, your word choice is just as important as with print, so you may want to take some time to prepare beforehand. Here, people will be able to hear your tone of voice, so what you say is enhanced by how you say it.

With an in-person interview, whether it's being filmed for an audience or if it's just a private Q&A session with the reporter, you have the strongest possible chance to make an impression. From the way you dress to how you speak, everything you do will have an impact. Even if an in-person interview isn't being filmed, even if it's just the interviewer taking notes with a notepad, the energy and effort you put into your responses will influence the impression the reporter has of you when writing the article.

## Step 2

### **Check the Format of the Interview**



# Step 3

It takes time to get ready for an interview. Between vetting the interviewer, preparing talking points and other considerations, it may take a day or two to prepare yourself for the interview.

If the reporter/news organization that contacted you is pushing for an immediate interview that would prevent you from having the time to adequately prepare for it, don't be afraid to ask them to reschedule the interview for a more convenient date and time.

## **Ask Yourself “Is There Enough Time to Prepare?”**

Most reputable news organizations will give you an extra day or two to prepare so that you can give them a more thorough, informative account. Sometimes, the reason for the rush might be something that is unavoidable, such as the correspondent only being in your area for that day, in which case you might be able to schedule an over-the-phone interview at a later date. If the interview is for a print publication, you may be able to have them email you their questions and you can email them your responses.

If you're not comfortable performing an interview right away, don't feel pressured to do it that very minute. Ask for the time you need to get ready. Once you have that time, it's best to start getting prepared for your interview...



# PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW

When it comes to having a successful interview with the media, preparation is key. When you prepare for an interview well before the date of the event, you will be much more likely to create a positive first impression with viewers/readers.

Think about interviews that you have seen in the past. Which made a more positive impression on you? Was it:

- A** The professionally-dressed, well-groomed presenter who spoke clearly and concisely

OR

- B** The disheveled, rambling person who struggled to find a point to talk about and was consistently speechless or confused throughout the interview.

Even if presenter B made a more lasting impression in your mind, it probably wasn't a very good one. While spectacular failure may be memorable, it does not get potential customers to trust you and your business. There really is such a thing as bad press.

However, you can make getting through an interview without incident much easier on yourself by taking a few basic precautions before the interview ever starts.



# Step 1

## **Dress Appropriately**

It's such a basic thing that many people forget all about it until it's too late. In an interview (especially one that is being broadcast on TV), the clothes really can make the man (or woman). Finding attire that is appropriate to the situation is a critical first step in making a positive first impression on potential customers, as well as the interviewer.

This is not to say that you should dust off the tux or go out of your way to buy a super-expensive business suit that typically gets reserved for the upper echelon meetings of a Fortune 500 company. Rather, this means wearing an outfit that matches the mood and setting of your business. Something that sincerely conveys what your business is all about will be much better than dressing up in an outfit that you would never wear on the job. If your business attire happens to be an expensive suit though, go ahead and wear it.

If you are unsure what to wear to the interview, the basic advice here is to avoid "loud" colors and patterns and opt for conservative clothing in order to appeal to the largest audience. A lime green polka dot coat might draw attention, but unless that happens to be your business' colors, a plain earth-tone coat is probably a better idea.



Beyond watching the interviewer's past work, ask them for a copy of the questions that they will ask you so that you can prepare ahead of time.

In many cases, the interviewer will have at least a few preliminary questions that they will plan to ask, and can provide you a list of these questions to help you prepare. However, it is not always the case that the interviewer will have a complete list of the questions that they will ask during the live interview.

This does not mean that the reporter intends to ambush you with surprise questions. It may be that the reporter does not have much experience with your particular field and may need more background information to make sense of your responses. You can help get a reporter up to speed with your particular field of expertise by carrying out a pre-interview with them. Sometimes, questions may not occur to the interviewer until they've learned a little more about what you do.

If the interview is fairly short-notice, the reporter may not even have had time to prepare more than just a preliminary set of basic questions. This can actually be a great opportunity for you to guide the discussion yourself. Before the interview begins, you can prepare talking points of your own to help guide the interview and keep it on-topic. Write down a few questions/statements to keep the conversation moving, and the reporter may appreciate your foresight and effort.

## Step 2

**Review the  
Questions that  
the Interviewer  
will ask**



# Step 3

## **Establish a Positive Goal for the Interview**

When you're preparing to go through an interview, take a little time to establish a goal for that interview. This goal might not necessarily have to be a business goal such as "I'm going to turn everyone who sees this into a customer." While such a goal is a great one for a business owner, doing so requires you to meet many other, smaller goals.

Instead, look at the format of the interview and the topic, and create a few realistic goals for it based on that. For example, is the interview about your opinion on a certain financial topic? If so, then your goal should be to demonstrate your knowledge to the best of your ability and impress others with your expertise.

If the interview is about how your business achieved its recent success, then you'll want to talk about how you achieved that success. Also, you can set a goal to talk about what sets your business apart from the competition.

Stay focused, create a reasonable, achievable goal, and the interview will be much more manageable.



Before the interview, be sure to:

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Eat well (but not too much).
- Review the above steps for preparation (dress appropriately, review the interviewer's past work, review the questions to be asked, think on your goals for the interview).
- Take a few minutes before the start of the interview to relax by doing something that you find helps you to be calm and centered (reading a book, watching a funny 5-minute video, sitting down and closing your eyes for a little while, etc.).

# Step 4

**RELAX!**

Taking a couple of minutes to engage in a relaxing activity can help prevent a lot of stress during an interview. Keeping your composure is often one of the biggest challenges of an interview.

Being able to maintain eye contact with the interviewer, having a steady voice and being able to talk without rambling can help you create a strong impression in a videotaped interview.

Of course, once you're done relaxing and preparing, it's time to get through the interview proper, which brings us to our next section...



# HANDLING THE INTERVIEW

With some preparation, the interview itself should go smoothly. Remember, most interviewers are not there to humiliate you or make you look bad. In fact, by vetting interviewers beforehand, you should have weeded out any such individuals already.

So, now that you've had time to prepare, here are a few tips for getting through the interview proper:

## Step 1

### Do the Pre-Interview

Before the interview proper begins, you may be asked to do a “pre-interview” with the reporter. Take this opportunity whenever it presents itself, especially if you have expertise in a field that is not typically considered “common knowledge.” Giving the reporter basic knowledge about your field of expertise is a great way to make sure that they can understand and follow the conversation. Talking over the reporter’s head prevents them from asking the right questions to help viewers/readers understand what it is that you do and why it’s important.

Of course, correspondents from specialty magazines that regularly cover events within your area of expertise will probably be more familiar with what you’ll be talking about, as will dedicated fans of such publications. Even so, it can never hurt to check that interviewer’s expertise with a little pre-interview.



While you may be keeping your own goals for the interview in mind, don't forget to give a thorough answer to each question the interviewer may be asking. Giving a complete answer to any and all questions helps to demonstrate your knowledge and enhance credibility with the audience.

For most interviews, this will be easy. The important thing here is to remain steady, confident and consistent with your answers. Don't rush through the interview. Control the pace and be as detailed as possible in your answers.

If one of your answers contains highly technical information or very tricky wording, clarify your meanings whenever possible. If it is possible that the meaning of your answer could be dramatically changed by a misstatement or could otherwise be misinterpreted, be sure to clarify that to the interviewer, and to spell out exactly what you mean and the context for what you say.

## Step 2

### **Concentrate on Giving Great Answers to Each Question**



## Step 3

### **Be Courteous**

Being thorough with your information is only a part of handling the interview. Maintaining a friendly, courteous manner during the interview is also very important to getting the most out of your interview.

Whenever the reporter asks for clarification about your meaning or for more background information about your business and what you do, take it as the opportunity it is. Expressing exasperation at being asked a question, even one you may have already answered twice, reflects negatively on you and your business. Being asked such questions is just one more way that you can prove your expertise and reinforce it by being consistent.

Whether it's during the pre-interview, the interview itself, the scheduling of the interview or even during the post interview talk, NEVER assume that what you say is going to be off the record.

During an interview, you want to put your best foot forward to impress people. One careless off the cuff remark can become a problem later.

The basic rule here is: "If you don't want it printed or put on TV for all the world to see, don't say it."

## Step 4

**NEVER Assume  
Anything You Say  
is "Off the Record"**

## Step 5

**Ask to  
Review  
the Article  
before it Gets  
Published**

When the interview is finished, you'll want to read it before anyone else can. It's a perfectly natural impulse, and one you may benefit from.

If you can get the publisher to give a copy of the article or video to review before it gets sent out to the masses, you have an opportunity to make corrections. For example, if there is a typo in the article that needs addressing, you can bring it to the editor's attention rather than having to wait for a retraction/correction in a later issue.

However, not all publishers are able to provide a review copy of your interview before it gets released. This can be because of scheduling deadlines being too tight to wait for your review, or it may be because of an established policy on the part of the publisher to prevent the content of the interview leaking prematurely.

In such cases, be sure to read the article or watch the televised interview, and don't be afraid to ask for a retraction if you find a gross error or misrepresentation of your views in the final version of the interview. Remember, mistakes do happen, and most news organizations will work with you to correct them ASAP.

Now that the interview's over, there's still more work to be done in order to maximize the impact of your time in the spotlight.



# PROMOTING YOUR INTERVIEW

After you're done with the interview, you might think that your work is done. However, in order to get the most out of the work you've already put in preparing and getting through the interview, you have to hype up the interview itself.

While your article will reach the majority of that news organization's readers/viewers, that doesn't necessarily mean that it will reach all of your target audience. Also, some readers might read that publication or watch that show for a completely different section than the one your interview appears in. Another possibility is that people might miss the release of your interview when it first gets released.

Whatever the case may be, there's more to getting the biggest possible response to your interview than just making it through the actual interview and waiting for the news agency to distribute it. No, you'll have to promote the interview yourself if you want to reach the biggest audience possible and get more positive returns on your efforts.

## Promotion Tip

# 1

### **Share the Article with Friends and Colleagues**

Obtain a few extra copies of the magazine or newspaper article, or get a couple of tapes of an on-camera interview and hand them out to people you know. While this kind of grass-roots advertising of your interview might not move the needle on your business right away, it does help to raise awareness and even get the people who like and respect you the most to get involved with promoting your article.

If nothing else, you'll have an opportunity to share your story of the experience with friends.



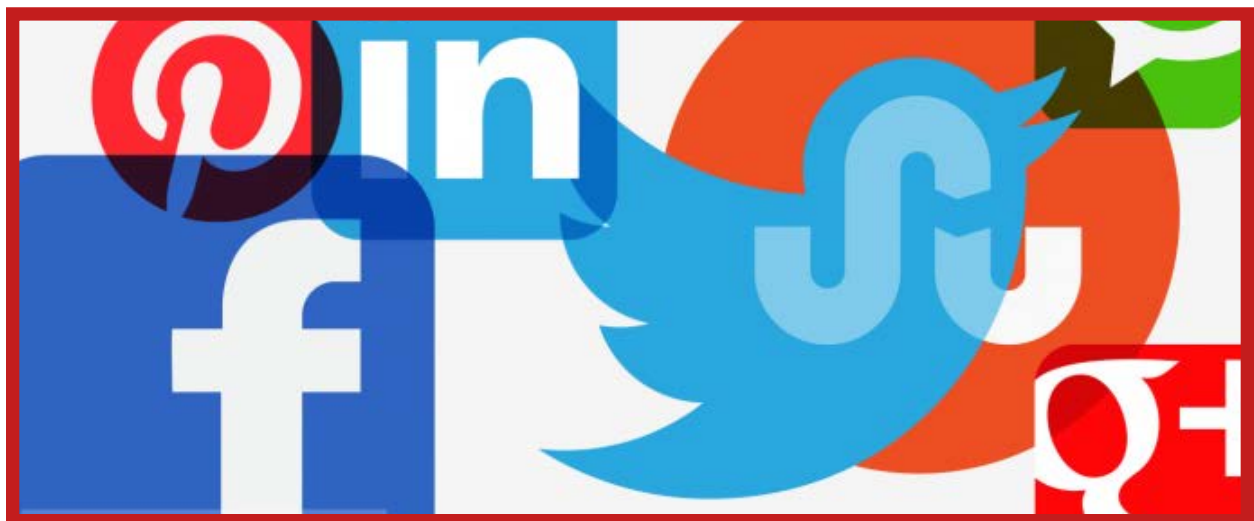
Thanks to the modern marvel of the internet, news can get around a lot faster now than it did before. Social media sharing sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Twitter and Google+ allow people to share information from anywhere there's an internet connection instantly. Where people once had to wait for their news to clear a long editing and approvals process, now they load up their favorite media site and get a sea of information available to them at their fingertips.

Promotion  
Tip  
**2**  
**Social Media  
Sharing**

With the ability to share links to the original publisher article or video, these social media sites are a powerful tool for raising awareness about your interview. The more interesting the interview, the faster it will be shared from person to person, perhaps even going “viral” as it gets re-uploaded time and time again to everyone on a subscriber's friends list, and their friends list, and so on, and so forth.

All you really need to get this process started is a link to your interview that can be shared online and a list of followers or friends to share this content with.

Now, the social media networks that you use to promote your article will vary depending on the nature of your business and your intended audience. For example, Pinterest is primarily used to share visually-focused content, so a video interview would be a great fit for this site. On the other hand, LinkedIn is a social media site aimed towards businesses and professionals, so a text article where you discuss the state of your industry would be a great fit for this site. Just remember to keep your audience in mind when planning out which social media sites to use, and what to put on them.



Promotion  
Tip

3

**Posting the  
Article to  
Your Website**

If you have a business website, you can put the article (or a link to it) on your company's blog. If you want to recreate the article on your own site, be sure to do so only with the express permission of the article's publisher. Yes, what you say is your own opinion, but the actual article still belongs to the publisher.

If you cannot get the permission of the publisher to re-create the article on your site, you can still write about the fact that you have an interview and put a link to the publisher's article/video on your site so that people can see the original in its entirety.

This way, you can show visitors to your site the interview while also raising awareness about your company.



If you have a fairly successful website, odds are you have a list of contacts that you've acquired through that website over the years. Whether they've subscribed to your blog or filled out a request for one of your services, you have entire lists of people who might be interested in your interview.

This is where email promotion of your interview comes into play. With email, you can create an announcement concerning your interview and send it to all of the people who have expressed an interest in you and your company by subscribing to your email lists.

It is very important that you avoid using bought email lists, as they tend to be stuffed with obsolete email accounts and bad leads. Sending spam emails to the wrong email addresses can cost you a lot in the long run, so it's often not worth it. Stick to sending emails to a list of active subscribers who are engaged with the content you create.

## Promotion Tip

# 4

### Using Email



Promotion  
Tip

# 5

## Commemorating the Article/ Video for around the Office

Sometimes, people just like having something physical to act as evidence for an event. One way to give your customers this evidences is to create a custom wall plaque of your interview to adorn your business.

With a custom plaque featuring the article of your interview hanging in your office or workplace, you have authentic proof of your notoriety and expertise that everyone can see. Such a plaque says that you are a trusted pillar of your industry, someone to go to with questions in order to get answers.

When you have a plaque featuring an article from a trusted news source, you have a badge of quality and reliability that others will pay attention to. People can read the article contained within and know that they're doing business with someone who is reputable and reliable.





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Today!

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