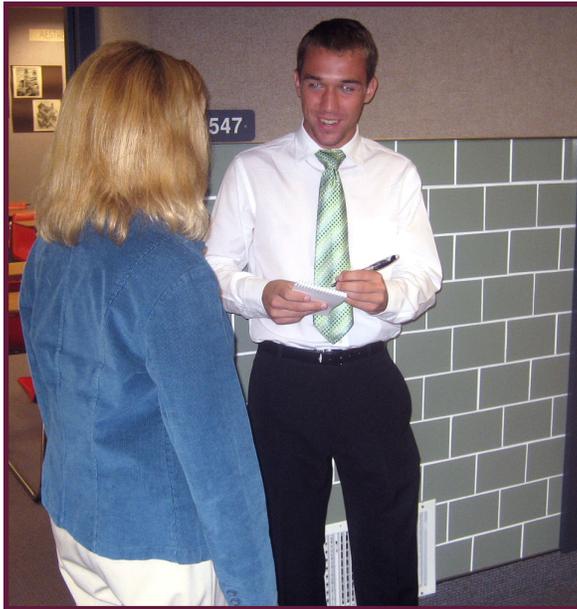


INTERVIEWING

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

So, you've been assigned a story and now need to conduct some interviews. No problem! First, research the topic and the people you are going to interview. Don't waste time asking questions that you already know the answer to or can find the answer to before the interview. Also, determine your stance on using "off-the-record" material and make sure your subject knows where you stand.

When interviewing a source, try to match their style of dress with yours. Avoid over-dressing or under-dressing, but remember, if left with no choice, it is better to be over-dressed than under-dressed.



1

WHEN YOU ARRIVE/STARTING OFF

After you meet the person you are interviewing, start slow to establish your credibility. Begin with some yes/no questions that make you look like you know what you're talking about. Once the interviewee is comfortable, proceed to open-ended questions and allow the interviewee time to think before responding. If you are meeting in someone's office or home, take notes about their possessions, design style and other things that pop out at you while conducting the interview.

2

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Take accurate notes! It will be helpful if you have a shorthand developed to help take notes quickly. Even if recording the interview, take notes, as technology can fail. Ask specific questions and allow for the interviewee the time to respond. Pay attention and have a conversation. Listen for follow-ups, don't be too preoccupied with your next question.

3

FINISHING UP

At the end of your interview, ask your interviewee if there is anything he or she would like to add. This way, the interviewee can follow-up an earlier statement or go on record with something else they wanted to say. Also, ask if it is OK for you to follow-up at a later time should you need clarification or have another question. Interviewees will appreciate your attention to detail.

4

WRITING THE STORY

Your best bet is to begin transcribing your notes while the interview is still fresh in your head whether you write the story that very minute or not. Your interview may lead to you conducting other interviews or doing further research. Some reporters will also use this time to send the interviewee a thank you note for their time.

TIPS

- dress appropriately, don't over-dress, don't under-dress
- develop your own form of shorthand
- listen and allow for response time
- don't let yourself become the interviewee
- be flexible, allow for spontaneous questions
- conduct the interview at a location comfortable to the interviewee
- interview in person, if you must interview by phone do so, but avoid interviews over the Internet