

TOP TIPS FOR A BROADCAST INTERVIEW

COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS BRIEF

Be prepared and be confident - you are the expert

What you need to know in advance

- What is the item about and why does the reporter want you?
- What's the programme and broadcaster?
- Is it live or pre-recorded? If pre-recorded, when will it be broadcast?
- How long will the interview be?
- Is it an individual interview or will you be part of a debate?
- What are the technical arrangements?

Preparation

- Think about what you'll be asked and how you would answer.
- Write down your three key messages, and any relevant figures you might need.
- Think about the audience and how your story is relevant to them.

For television

- Be well dressed but comfortable, and don't wear anything that could distract the viewer.
- Look at the interviewer, not the camera.
- Where appropriate be expressive, convey your enthusiasm and passion.
- If you have time, watch an interview from the programme in advance to see what works.
- Sit up straight and don't fidget.

During the interview

- Keep your answers brief and conversational, try to avoid "ums" and "ahs".
- Stop when you've answered the question, it's not your responsibility to fill the silence.
- Be prepared but not scripted.
- Don't use technical or academic jargon.
- Do use interesting analogies and real-world examples.
- If you don't feel comfortable answering a question, say so and return to a key message.
- Use bridging answers to steer the interview back to your key messages, eg "I wouldn't put it like that...if you look at the facts..." or "that's right...and what's interesting is..."
- Listen out for signals from the interviewer, eg "very briefly..." "can you sum up..." or "in a sentence".
- Take control using confident phrases, eg "I think the real issue here is..." or "what people might find surprising is..."

Don't forget

- Be enthused and animated, even at 6am!