

# The perfect interview – does it exist?

How many thousands of interviews have I listened to and watched over the last ... years. Some are riveting, others turn me off at a rate of knots.



Folks PLEASE do some research beforehand so your interviewee can have confidence in you. Bad manners – most interviewers cannot resist interposing their own views, interrupting the speaker and not listening. The most irritating are those who try to show that they know a lot about the subject, maybe even more than the unfortunate interviewee. You cannot be the interviewer and the interviewee at the same time.

The job of the interviewer is to put themselves in the shoes of the listener. If there are implications then its up to him to say 'are you saying that... etc.' This enables an important point to be hammered home to the audience without an obvious repetition.

Someone familiar with their material will tend to say something ambiguous, or use technical terms which the audience are unfamiliar with. This should be picked up and the interviewer should say something like ...for those not familiar with the subject..... what does so and so mean.

The interviewer should LISTEN and espouse the speaker, watching out and assisting in times of difficulty. Many

brilliant people are not trained speakers and sometimes, their work needs to be 'unpacked' and laid out in a simple way. It could be seen as a game of tennis. The interviewer returns the ball with a spin on it. The interviewee sees things in a slightly new light and explains it – perhaps for the first time – in a new way.

The interviewer should not bully or ridicule the guest otherwise the audience will take the sides of the guest. Better to let someone crucify themselves. Let the audience be the judge.

If the interviewer is on TV or ZOOM and has visual material then do a practice run beforehand. Questions like 'can you see this' or 'just hold on while I sort out this glitch' are not professional.

Is it really so important that the interviewer covers all the questions on his list. Try to go with the flow and imagine the whole like composing a piece of music. Introduction – main theme – variation – finale – maybe a coda.  
Its all music at its core

A phrase I like is 'you don't know what you know until you tell someone'. A talk can be equally beneficial for the interviewer, the interviewee and the audience.

NB A few deep breaths before, a glass of water during.