

# How to record Interviews?

## A step-by-step guide to record a perfect interview:

- **Familiarize yourself with the recording equipment**  
You can start by rehearsing a mock interview with a friend, and need to check out a few things,
- **Use a headphone when recording**  
The headphones assist you in precisely letting you know the sound quality that you will get, after the interview is over, it allows you the option of adjusting the position of the microphone, to improve the quality of the sound, and if there is a background noise, such as a hiss or a humming sound, you can stop recording and fix the problem
- **Position of the 'Microphone'**  
Always position the microphone about seven to eight inches, from the subjects mouth and a little on the side, hold the microphone in your hand, shuffling it between you and the interviewee, similar to how a TV reporter does. Just before you begin the interview, brief the person being interviewed to pause for a moment before responding to your questions, just to give you enough time to move the microphone back and forth. If you feel that the volume is loud, turn it low on the microphone, rather than moving the microphone away.

Do not use popping "p" and sharp "s" sounds

You need to position the microphone further away to the side from the subjects mouth, if the unnatural 'plosives' and 'sibilance' occur in the interview.



### Tutorial Topics

- **Recording Interviews**

**MAY 6, 2009**

### Lead Analyst

**Richard**

### Contributing Author

**Jessica Miller**

### Research Director

**Vincent Brown**

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- **Hold the interview in a quiet location.**

Any bedroom or a carpeted living room is an ideal location for a good intimate recording; do not use kitchens because they tend to have a lot of noise reflective surfaces and other cluttering noises. Rooms also have a lot of noise, which can affect the quality of the recording, shut the door and place the phone off the hook, check out all noise emanating equipments such as the air-conditioner, the fans, fluorescent light, just turn them off. Often the interviewee may fiddle with a ball-point pen, you need to make the subject aware of it, and also need to ensure that the radio and the television are shut.

- **Re-check the recording equipment**

It is very important to check-out your equipment and use the ones you are comfortable with, this will allow you to stay focused on the person being interviewed, rather than fiddling with the equipment. Rehearse with a mock interview first with the subject for a few minutes, asking general questions like, "What do you think of the interiors of the room?" or "Do you feel that the whether is getting fickle? You need to adjust the placement of the microphone, if there is a background noise. Rewind and cross check the recording to ensure that everything is working well. Very often one forgets to click on the 'record' switch, and nothing gets recorded.

- **Start a conversation.**

Start the interview with informal chatter, just to make sure that the interviewee is at ease, at the start of every tape make sure that the subject mentions his/her name, age, date and the city, an example would be, 'Hi, my name is Mike I am fifty four years of age, and it is the 2nd of January 2008, the time now is 14 hrs, and we are in the city of Los Angeles.

Ensure that you do not interrupt the interviewee, just when something interesting is being said by the subject, and desist from saying 'uh huh', instead nod you head in agreement.



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- **Prepare a list of interesting topics**

Look intently. Always look into the subject's eyes and appear interested and engaged in what is being said.

Mention interesting topics only. If you find a topic of discussion to be interesting, continue with it, and if the topic discussed sets in boredom, cut it short and revert back to a new topic.

Make the subject describe & present in detail. Try to add 'Can you elaborate please', if you feel your questions are being answered briefly,

Repeat the recording. A discussion where a lot of pauses or mistakes have occurred, do not hesitate to re-record the portions again, there are times where a subject may lose track of the topic being discussed, at that point you can add "you mentioned earlier.....(topic).....pause and wait for an answer. The final outcome of the interview should satisfy you, and if it doesn't, then do not hesitate to re-record the portions again.

Ask questions that can arouse 'sensibilities'. A subject when confronted with questions like "What were your feelings when...." will respond very thoughtfully. Never hesitate to shoot questions at the subject.

Making notes. List all questions or stories you may want to refer to in the interview, a brief description of the subject's profile, a passing reference of the location where the interview is being held and its surroundings

- **End of the interview.**

Is there anything else you would like to say? ...will be the last question, before you switch of the recorder



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