Interviewing Tips

1. When on assignment, always have with you: a reporter’s notebook, a digital camera, a digital tape recorder (if possible), extra batteries, 2-3 pens, a cell phone.
2. Remember the elements of reporting: traditional research (online, library, etc.), observation, interviewing, experience.
3. Be curious. Ask questions.
4. Always write down or record the names (including spelling) and contact information of everyone you talk to.
5. Take photos, not only for publication, but for information. This can be used later for description and to promote accuracy.
6. Go into your reporting assignment with a question, e.g., why don’t the clocks work right, or how does the state budget crisis really affect your school? Your reporting should try to answer the big question.
7. Always ask people if it’s alright to contact them again. Get contact information.
8. Don’t tell people you’re “just” doing a story for class. Make it clear that this story may be published somewhere. When it is published, let them know where they can find it.
9. Always ask people if they have any ideas on who else you can talk to or where else you can go for information.
10. Always ask yourself “why?”
11. Follow the money. Become numerically literate.
12. Don’t waste people’s time. Do your homework before you talk to people.
13. Always challenge your own assumptions. We’re all biased, but know your biases and go beyond them.
14. Don’t waste time being self-conscious. The focus should not be on you, but on the story and the people, events and situations you come in contact with.
15. Type up your notes, look at your photos, video, listen to your audio ASAP.
16. Know your audience. To whom are you telling this story? Why?

**How to Conduct an Interview for a High School Newspaper**

The heart of every good newspaper story is the recounting of the facts and responses as told by real-life people. The best way to get this information about an event, person, or story is to conduct interviews with as many people as possible. In order to get great interviews, you need to be constantly prepared. Always be outfitted with a notepad and pen everywhere you go. Keep a tape recorder, an extra tape and an extra set of batteries on hand, too.

**Instructions**

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Determine who you should interview. If you are at an event, it might be a good idea to just walk around and ask people questions about what is taking place. But it would be especially great to ask the coordinators of the events questions as well so plan in advance as possible.

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Make up a list of questions. Ask yourself what you or others would want to know about the subject. Consider who, what, when, where, why and how—but a substantial part of your story will be based on answers to the open-ended questions you ask. Do not just ask yes and no questions, ask questions that will stimulate a response from the person being interviewed.

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Take good notes. If at all possible, record the interviews with a tape recorder. This allows you to remain more involved with the interview as opposed to constantly scribbling notes. It also prevents misquotes because you will have documented evidence of what the interviewed person said. Be sure that if you are tape recording an interview that you have express permission.

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Listen closely to the person being interviewed. Your list of questions is supposed to guide you, but that does not mean that you should rattle off each question in order. Instead, let the conversation [develop](http://www.ehow.com/how_4540715_conduct-interview-high-school-newspaper.html) organically. Ask your subject the question and give them plenty of time to answer. Make careful note of their wording because good, useful quotes will add credibility to your story.

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Ask follow up questions. Show how involved you are in the interview by asking follow up questions. Once they have answered a question, ask them why and encourage them to elaborate. Don’t simply accept the vague or mysterious answers—try to push them further until the answers are clear. Remember, however, to be respectful of your subject.

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Type up your notes. Many times during an interview you will have the tendency to write frantically in your note pad. If you don’t analyze these scribbles quickly after the interview, you are liable to forget what you wrote altogether. Even if you used your tape recorder, make a transcription of what transpired during the interview in order to use your information [effectively](http://www.ehow.com/how_4540715_conduct-interview-high-school-newspaper.html) when writing your story.

Read more : <http://www.ehow.com/how_4540715_conduct-interview-high-school-newspaper.html>