

5 top tips to excel in media interviews

Media interviews are a great opportunity to get your message across. However, it can feel really daunting! But what if you could tap into the mind of an expert with 25 years of PR and media experience?

Catherine Dhanjal, Director at TheAnswer Ltd, has taken part in hundreds of interviews with the media and helped clients across the globe prepare. In this handy tipsheet, she has shared her top 5 tips with you to help you excel in your next interview.



More Information

www.theanswer.ltd
catherine.dhanjal@theanswer.ltd
07941 669 925

1

Get to know your audience

The first step is to identify who will be interviewing you and find out more about the audience the interview content will be shared with. If you're working with Catherine and the team they will brief you thoroughly. If you're currently working solo, you can do some of this by conducting some research online or within your network for example, or ask the interviewer for additional information, so you're prepared. Who are they? What matters to them? Which channels are they consuming information from? Finding out more about who's listening / watching will keep your audience engaged and ensure maximum effectiveness.

2

Find out about the topic

The next step is to find out the core topic of the interview to help guide your messaging. Though you should be prepared for this to go off tangent too! For example, is there any current news surrounding the topic you should be aware of? Do you have any quick-fire stats from reliable sources? Do you feel comfortable talking about it or need further coaching? Once you have a deeper understanding of what the key focus will be, you can tailor your answers to fit the interviewer and audience expectations, and identify if you need help. If you're working with TheAnswer we'll send you a briefing ahead of time.

RESEARCH.
SELECT.
PREPARE.
RESEARCH.
SELECT

Top Tips

3 Select your key messages

Figuring out how you want to respond to the questions you're going to be asked and carefully selecting the key messages you want to get across is really important to do in advance. What are you trying to communicate? How does your brand and values fit in with the topic? Do you have any real-world examples to help support any points you make? Jotting down a few short memorable messages, memorising them and being consistent throughout can really help keep you and your listeners on track. At TheAnswer we typically develop key messages for our clients as part of the PR strategy, to ensure the key messages flow seamlessly through all communications.

4 Rehearse and prepare

Rehearsing your responses can really help make you feel more confident and get the key messages to sink in. Talking out loud or asking a friend, colleague or coach to ask you some practice questions and recording them will allow you to get instant feedback and listen/watch back to see where you could improve. Another helpful tip if the topic is complex is to break the answer down into two or three parts. We don't recommend trying to memorise full paragraphs or answers as that will make the interview seem stale. Working with TheAnswer means we'll do practice interviews with you ahead of time.



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5 Get ready for the live interview

The big interview day has arrived! By now, you should've done enough research and rehearsing and be ready to go. But there are a few things to remember for the live interview. Speak slowly, stay calm and use short concise sentences to make your point. Try to keep your tone positive, professional and factual, especially if negative questions arise, take a moment to consider how you will react. Once the interview is finished, it may still be live so remain composed! And most of all, enjoy the experience.

Get in touch to find out how we could work together to ensure your media interviews are impactful, on message, stress free and a good use of your time.

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