



Ten Tips for Giving an Interview

You wrote the book – that was the hard part. Now it’s published and somehow (self preservation?) you didn’t consider you would need to give media interviews. Don’t panic. Keep these tips on hand for the next time you need to prep.

1. An interview is NOT a conversation – the only one “sharing” is you. You control the message, not the reporter.
2. Honesty is the ONLY policy. If you cannot tell the truth for matters of confidentiality, say so and move to another item of interest for the reporter.
3. People remember the ANSWER, not the question. Rephrasing a negative question, or just one that doesn’t really apply, only underscores the issue. Start the answer with a positive statement and move on to what you want to communicate.
4. Write down the three most important things you want to communicate on a 3x5 card and keep it near you for reinforcement.
5. Breathe. People forget! (You can tell – they run out of air before the end of the sentence.)
6. Nothing is “off the record” – understand the reporter has a job to do. If you don’t want them to cover it, don’t say it.
7. Speak in sound bites – short, complete thoughts – to make yourself quote-worthy.
8. When you are finished, stop! Make your point and then wait for the reporter to lead into the next question. Sometimes silence really *is* golden.
9. When returning calls, call the least important reporting outlet first to get your bearings.
10. When in doubt, call a professional. In an age when the public has immediate access to news, obtain the guidance of people who know how best to prepare. There are PR people who specialize in working with authors. Ask your agent or publisher for recommendations.