
UNIT 4 INTERVIEWING SKILLS REQUIRED FOR REPORTING

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the steps required for the preparation of an interview;
- list the skills required to conduct an interview;
- note down in advance what you want to get out of an interview;
- formulate your own strategy (course of action), according to the situation or person to conduct an interview; and
- distinguish between a good and a wasteful interview.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

We have come to the last unit of this block. So far we have discussed the news, the news values and types of news reporting. We have also discussed the qualities that a reporter must possess and the responsibilities one must shoulder.

A very authentic way of gathering facts, figures and opinions on various issues is to interview the persons concerned. In this unit, we shall discuss the importance of the interview in reporting, besides the skills required to master the art of conducting an interview.

Having done this, we shall proceed to the next block where our main theme will be "specialised reporting."

4.2. IMPORTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW

There are various ways of gathering information and knowledge for the media. One can do so from books, magazines and journals, or incidents, and by meeting people who hold important positions. Meeting or interviewing them is one of the most significant and important ways of gathering information, facts and knowledge. The interview is a very useful input for all media-print and electronic. It depends on how one would like to use an interview. It may be used as a programme to make the audience/reader get information/facts from the source directly. The interview can form the basis of an article, a feature or a commentary. Or, segments of an interview can be used to substantiate an argument or a point in an article or a radio/television feature.

4.2.1 The Importance of Preparing Oneself to Conduct an Interview

One may like to presume that you have written something in your life; a letter, an application, an article or a poem. One can also assume that you might not have been satisfied with the first draft. Therefore, you may have re-written it changing sentences, paragraphs, words, etc. It is also possible that after changing the draft twice, thrice or more times, you were satisfied with your written material.

Let us call this the preparatory stage. To do an interview is also something like doing an original work in which you create something. Thus, to do a meaningful interview—both for yourself and for the person whom you plan to talk to—it is necessary that you do your home work right. It is only then, that an interview conducted after proper preparation, would make a certain impact.

It is said that to speak for five minutes over radio, a person must prepare himself/herself at least for five hours. Therefore, preparation is very important. We will discuss this further in 4.3.

Activity 1

You may have access to a radio set. It would help immensely if you list the various types of programmes aired by All India Radio. On a given day, switch on your radio set and tune in to your favourite programmes. Listen to the programmes for an hour. While listening to the programmes, fill in the following columns:

Name of the Programme	Type of Programme	Interview used or not
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For example:

Water and Health	Feature	Yes
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From this activity, you will become aware that the interview is a very important part of our radio programme. You may repeat this exercise for television, and even newspapers and magazines.

4.2.2 On The Record and Off The Record Interviews

Interviews can be on the record or off the record. On the record interviews are those whose contents can be attributed to the person interviewed.

In this case, unless there is a prior agreement to use the whole of the interview verbatim, portions of the interview, that have some use for the reporter can be utilised and the rest discarded or canned for future use.

Off the record interviews are those in which the information is given, but the source is not to be identified by the interviewer. In such cases, the source identified is "a source in the Defence Ministry" or "a General Commanding a division" etc. In such cases it is normal to cross-check the facts from another source, since the man giving the information is not willing to stand up and be counted.

There can be interviews which are partly on the record and partly off the record. That is, some information given can be attributed to the person who gives it and some can be attributed to "a source" or "a Defence Ministry Official" or "a General", etc.

4.3 HOW TO PREPARE FOR AN INTERVIEW

The most important part of the interview is to know your subject as completely as possible. It could be a VIP, an important member from the bureaucracy, the art world or the corporate sector or just an ordinary citizen. Accordingly, you should prepare yourself by reading about the person. It is imperative for you to not only fully research the information you want from your subject, but also the person behind it. You should also have all the essential background information on the interviewee, e.g. his/her family, hobbies, interests. This will help you to build an instant rapport with the interviewee. It will enable you to get on with the job most comfortably. A reluctant interviewee only acts as an obstacle and foils the very purpose of the interviewer.

4.3.1 Research

It is most important to research your subject matter. It could be a subject in which you neither have any interest nor adequate knowledge. But once you are fully armed with the basic and important information acquired through books, newspapers, journals or magazine articles, you will be much more comfortable and should be successful in your venture.



For example, if you are required to interview a criminal lawyer, a policeman or an accused, you should have enough knowledge of criminal law—cognisable and non-cognisable offences, various Acts/Sections which govern the offences, and other legal provisions. This will help you extract the required information. You must know your subject matter as well as the person whom you intend to talk to about the subject matter.

4.3.2 Editing Interviews for Use

All journalists must remember two fundamental factors: First, all interviews are subject to editing. So there is no harm in culling more information than you can use. The information that you need to buttress an argument or to refute another or to make a point, can be used at the appropriate place. The rest can be stored for use in future.

Second, no statement made in the interview is allowed to be used out of context. If, for instance, a Government authority vehemently denies that any human rights violations were made during a particular clash in Kashmir, one cannot quote him to create the impression that no human rights violations are made by security forces during any clashes. If the authority interviewed does not generalise it, the reporter or subeditor is debarred from generalising it.

4.3.3 Strategy

It is important to establish contact with the interviewee much in advance of the interview. How do you do this? It could be a direct contact—physical or through telephone. More often than not, where important interviewees are concerned, there is a channel you will have to go through. It could be the private secretary or the members of the family—referred to as the “protector of the interviewee.”



So, the first thing to do is to establish a rapport with the protector. To get to your subject matter or the person, you must be able to play to the gallery to defeat all the obstacles imposed by the “protectors”.

4.3.4 What You Want from the Interview

If the first thing is to establish contact and to build up a rapport, the most important part of the preparation is to decide what you want to get out of the interview. May be you want substantiation of a fact you have discussed; Or the refutation of something; Or may be you want the interviewer's views on some proposition you or someone else is making.

Here, an experienced journalist recalls for our benefit one such exciting interview that he had conducted some years ago.

In 1962 an International Invitation Table Tennis Tournament was held in Lucknow. Taking part were Victor Parua of England, Ferem Sido of Hungary who was among the first five in world Table Tennis. The cream of Indian Table Tennis was also there. The foreigners were lodged in Carlton Hotel, the best in Lucknow those days, and the

Indians in Capoor Hotel, the city's second best those days. Both were declared out of bounds for reporters because while the players played in the evening and until late at nights, they used to rest undisturbed during the day.

I was the Sports Editor of M. Calapati Rau's National Herald. The Sports Reporter did the spot reporting of the matches. I devised a way of getting past security to get to the players. A codeword prearranged with Meena Parande, who had been India's No. 1 player among women for seven years, was used by me to get to Meena's room in Capoor's at 11.30 a.m. one morning. As I knocked at and entered Meena's spacious room, I walked T, Thiruvengadam, K. Nagaraj and Pappu Haldankar, the three top male players of the country.

I was clear in my mind that the objective was to find out about Meena's future plans. Though some of the questions might relate to Meena's past, background, experiences, etc., they were to be used only as ballast. The focus had to be on the future, since her past was already much written about and well known.

As I plied her with questions, she seemed unclear about her future plans. This put me on the alert. The plans of such high-ranking players are usually charted at least six months in advance. If this was not so, there must be something else in the offing. What was it?

Meena was 25 or 26. She had been on top in India for seven years. By now it must not be very exciting to get one win after the other, to put it mildly. If one puts it bluntly, it should be quite boring.

I decided to probe from another side. Was she contemplating marriage? Considering that 25 or 26 is supposed to be a pretty ripe age for the marriage of Indian girls.

Meena gave me a look as if say, "How did you know?". Then she replied diplomatically, "Not before retiring from competitive table tennis."

Was she planning retirement?

Meena spoke the whole truth. What else? She had been on top of Indian Women's table tennis for seven years and had no more worlds to conquer. In international table tennis she was not in the top 50 among women, and 26 was not the age to go up. She could only go down. The wise thing was to retire now when she was at the peak.

"Now?" I asked incredulous as I realised I was on the trail of a scoop.

"Well", she said after a pause, "now or after the next Nationals", which were coming up in two months.

I asked some more probing questions. The male players echoed Meena's argument. All of them were going to retire. They had remained on top in India for years and had no hope of making good in the world arena. They were 27 to 29 and had to look forward to raising a family and carving a career for themselves. It was high time they retired.

I had got the confirmation that I wanted. Coming back, I reported that India was losing the cream of its table tennis and quoted copiously from the interview. It was an all-India cream.

The lessons to be drawn from this example are two. First, it is vital for an interviewer to decide what he wants out of the interview. It is not a fishing expedition in which you net whatever you get. It is a hunt where you go after a target and get it.

Second, one has to keep his senses on full alert and the antenna unfurled to catch nuggets of news which have a knack of falling from the lips of the interviewee at the most unexpected moments.

4.3.5 Preparing Yourself

It is important and essential, to make a deep study of the individual you plan to interview. Let us say that the person is particularly fond of dogs. When you go to interview her/him, it will be fatal to talk about how you abhor dogs or how they are dangerous. As interviewer, you cannot afford to convey your general wariness about the canine species — not verbally, not even through body language.

The information you seek to extract from the person may have nothing whatsoever to do with dogs. Yet, the person may react by remaining uncommunicative through the rest of the interview if you start off on the wrong note. Paying attention to such minute, apparently insignificant matters really helps in conducting the interview smoothly. You must build a personal rapport to begin with, so you may start the interview comfortably.

4.3.6 Physical Preparation

In the electronic media, there are two ways of interviewing: with the Prime Minister or the President, the setting would be as designed by the Public Relation Officer or the Principal Information Officer. If it is a television interview, then you need the following: a) cameraman; b) sound recordist; c) lighting technician; and d) the sound technician.

The other way could be that the interview is to be held in a studio. In that case, you should adequately arrange the setting in the studio. For the radio studio interview, you would need a very good recording machine. You use a lip microphone which prevents extraneous sound from getting injected into the microphone. If the interview is only a part of what you are actually going to air, then it should be transcribed. Mark the important segments, and tailor the interview to the actual slot requirements with a suitable link to give necessary continuity. To do this, you would require an editor to do a proper cut and paste work of the tape.

In radio and TV interviews, it is important for the interviewer and the interviewee to discuss what they respectively want out of it. Frequently a mini interview is held until a few seconds before the recording devices are switched on.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) You have been selected as a reporter by "The Poona Times", a daily newspaper. The editor has not been able to size you up well. On the very first day, he asks you to interview one of your family members or friends about her/his childhood and the whole milieu in which (s) he grew up. How would you prepare to have the interview? List the steps, and then prepare a flow chart.

4.4 HOW TO GET AN INTERVIEW

Getting an interview can often be difficult because the interviewer is generally viewed with suspicion! To overcome this handicap, the interviewer has to be imaginative. The interviewer labours between two competing factors. One, the public has the right to know and you are the tool employed to gather the information. Two, from the legal point of view nobody can be forced into talking and hence, the job can be tiresome and at times, very frustrating.

If you have seriously completed Activity-1 and done Check Your Progress-1 then you may proceed further.

Remember that an interviewer or a reporter would in most cases, like to get information, facts and opinions from the interviewee. Therefore, it is very important that one's own participation in the interview is secondary. One must let the interviewee do most of the talking.

To make this happen smoothly, a number of skills and techniques have to be deployed to get your feet inside before the door is slammed and you have your feet stuck up half way. We list some skills here.

- a) There is the direct approach: to telephone and tell the interviewee what you want.
- b) The end round: A secretary in a business or government office will generally try and give you the "brush-off", although the interviewee may be totally unaware of the secretary's action. You must recognise the go-between and try and make that person your friend. Remember, it is just a habit for the private secretary to say that the boss has no time. The attempt of the interviewer/reporter should be to try and make the secretary/protector 'one's friend.
- c) When faced with repeated failure, find out the person's hide-out and with an overdose of apology, just barge in.
- c) Sit-in: It pays to just sit and wait till the subject of interview shows up in spite of secretaries and protectors saying that "the boss has no time to see you". Take your lunch or dinner packet along with you to emphasize your determination.
- e) The appeal: As soon as you get a glimpse of the reluctant interviewee, make your appeal as quickly and strongly as possible, e.g., "We have some information that you are to be shifted from your department/office" or something which will capture the attention of the object of your interview.
- f) Be courteous and polite: Tell the interviewee that there are two sides to every story, and we want to know yours. Thus, you arouse the interviewee's curiosity and attention. In many cases, it pays to tell the interviewee of the other side.

Teaching someone how to conduct an interview is like telling him/her to conduct a conversation. Some are direct and aggressive — which can help. But shyness is no serious handicap: people tend to tell the shy interviewer their "secrets".

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Answer this question in five short sentences.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) List five important skills required to hold an interview:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Activity 2

- A. In Check Your Progress-1 you had prepared yourself to conduct an interview with your family member or friend. Now, you are aware of the important skills required to conduct a successful interview. Keeping all these important skills in mind, conduct the actual interview.

(Please Note: Activity 2 B should be done after you have completed Activity 2 A).

- B. Are you satisfied with the interview you have just conducted with your family member or friend? Probably yes. But I am sure you are not so happy with some aspects of the actual questioning. Identify those weaknesses and list them down. For instance,
- better phrasing of a question or rearranging the order of putting the questions.

4.5 DOs AND DONTs FOR AN INTERVIEW

- a) Be operational on time for the interview. This is very important. It shows the importance of the interviewee and that he has not been taken for granted. "To be operational" is a journalistic term described in the book **Advanced Journalism**. In a nut shell, you must be ready right on time to start the interview. Arriving on time may be good in most cases, for one has to do things like setting up the camera, or recording devices before the interview. One should arrive 10-15 minutes before time in order to be operational on time.



- b) Outline your reasons for being there, unless you are working on something very sensitive. If you do not specify your reasons, it may create problems.
- c) Start the interview with a broad question. This helps you to size up the person and also collect your thoughts. It also helps to receive information you may not have anticipated and to chart out your course of action—a correct direction that the interview should take.

- d) Do not interrupt until the interviewee has relaxed. Avoid making the interviewee uncomfortable at the outset. It would be of little value. An interviewee kept at complete ease can be most helpful.
- e) Let him speak at length on his favourite topic/achievement/escapade/feat. You will get nuggets of information. The irrelevant facts can always be edited out. Be inquisitive, even enthusiastic about his achievements. He will loosen up and be willing to come to the subject you want to discuss at length.
- f) Grunt and chuckle occasionally.
- g) Stick to your subject.
- h) Avoid commenting except to egg him on to talk more. Let the interviewee do most of the talking. This makes that person feel good and wise.
- i) Do not end the interview till you have the basics—how does he spell his name, official title, age, etc. Never ever assume that you know these things. Preferably get these details in advance from his staff and then get it confirmed by him.
- j) Be understanding. Do not be insensitive. Even a convict will remember that you were nice to him. Taking notes is a part of the interview. Also, make the interviewee feel important—often it is the interviewee who takes down notes. Relax and double check the contents. Keep the interviewee at ease.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: i) Answer this question in five short sentences.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) In the section 'Dos and Don'ts', we were told that one must start the interview with a broad question. We have just given reasons why one should start the interview with a broad question. Can you think of any other reasons? Also, can you think of any other opening? Respond in four lines.

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- 2) How will note-taking during an interview help a reporter/interviewer?

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4.6 THE INTERVIEW AS AN EXTENSION OF THE CONVERSATION

The interviewer must not only be conversant with the subject matter of the interview but must also be a good conversationalist. All the important features of interpersonal communication come into play in an interview. In a face to face meeting, the stress is on both the language used in speech and the non-verbal body language. But, in a telephonic interview, the stress would be on the tone and inflexion given to the words. In this type of interview, it can be rather difficult to assess the intended meaning since the other person's actual expression is hidden from sight. We shall now discuss the salient points to be kept in mind when conducting an interview in person.

On occasion, an interview may not be planned or rehearsed before it actually takes place. But then there are a few thumb rules that are fundamental to any interview. Preparing oneself to interview a personality, a celebrity or even the person-on-the-street is actually an on-going long-term process. This is because one must be a well-rounded interviewer, skilled in the art of handling a variety of topics and areas as also a range of idiosyncrasies that are inherent in people in general. One must be prepared for any turn of events and still be able to take it all in one's stride, that is to say, with equanimity. One cannot acquire these skills overnight but must nurture them over a period of time. A great deal of deep study of persons and happenings is called for. The would-be interviewer must yearn to learn.

4.6.1 Your Part as The Interviewer

Send and receive messages accurately. Choose words that your receiver will understand. Avoid technical words and terms. Words should be very simple.

4.6.2 How to Generate Ideas for Your Interview

Some interviews are simply old wine in new bottles. Others seek to convey an innovation or idea that the interviewee has recently come up with. Yet other interviews are made out of the interviewer's idea(s): giving a new twist to an event, throwing new light on a discovery that had been accepted at face value, and such like. One must develop a keen sense of identifying material for use in an interview. One must also have the knack to read more into matters than is at first apparent: something like reading between the lines. That way, a much-interviewed person may reveal a fresh side of the matter being discussed and perhaps also of his/her own personality hitherto hidden from public view.

Having a finely-tuned news-sense helps to generate ideas for interviews. It enables one to capture a glimpse of the extra-ordinary in the most 'ordinary' things and persons. It depends on the situation whether one comes upon a fresh insight during the interview by asking hard-hitting questions or by putting queries in a gentle manner. These are tactics that ought to be learnt by assessing and recognising the opportune time and place when it comes your way. Alternately, you could create the right atmosphere to make your interviewee reveal material which would form the basis for a good interview. In effect, the interviewer gives shape and direction to the interview, always allowing enough leeway for the unexpected utterance. One could then build carefully on what is sometimes said in such an offhand manner. The interviewer must, therefore, remain alert and latch on to every word that is said during the conversation. One can become adept in this technique only with practice.

Activity 3

- a) List ten ideas on which you might base some interviews.

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- b) Underline five ideas you know and care about.

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- c) Which of these five ideas is currently prominent? Will any of these ideas become redundant if the actual interview is not conducted immediately?

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- d) Choose one of these five ideas and develop a range of questions that you would ask as the interviewer.

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4.7 TIPS FOR LIVE INTERVIEWS

Put the speaker completely at ease.

Let him tell his story in his own way and, with due regard for the requirements of the medium, in his own words.

Let him get on with it—the listeners want to hear him, and they take the interviewer for granted.

Frame the questions or interjections in such a way that these arise naturally out of the speaker's narrative and are neither artificial spring-boards, nor impertinent instructions.

Be friendly without being familiar.

Be strictly impartial, treating the rich and the poor, the famous and the humble with equal respect.

Be sincere and never half-hearted or frivolous in your approach.

4.8 INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Advance preparation for the interview by way of well-thought out questions and a thorough consideration of approach is very helpful. One need not fear that the final outcome will sound stilted with no natural spontaneity. Usually the reverse is true. One will be able to pose the most appropriate questions when one is well-versed with the subject. But how should one conduct oneself when conducting an interview? At the outset, arrive on time for the interview. This will help keep the interviewee in good humor.

4.8.1 Taking Notes

Taking notes is an essential part of interviewing: the two cannot be separated. Some

take down everything, even irrelevant and redundant remarks. Take down only what is important (and save time). However, that may not always be possible. People sometimes stop talking when you start writing. You do not always know what is relevant until you have written it all down and reviewed it. You must train your mind to have a flawless recall. A wrong quote can be most embarrassing professionally. It costs you your credibility. Now-a-days, there is the help of a recorder. Take permission of the interviewee before using it.

- a) Write as fast as you can; knowing shorthand can be a great help
- b) Keep hand and mind together, listen to key phrases; note the book references/citations. Verbatim quotes are especially valuable on touchy subject matters. A tape recorder helps you to review the interview *in toto*. It is a must for a question and answer story. There are also disadvantages.

Always carry a note book. Never run out of tape or be faced with dead batteries. Remember to take down notes as well.

Off the record: Remember, you are honour-bound to respect and keep it secret in the best interest of journalism.

- b) Whenever you get a glimpse of the reluctant prospective interviewee passing within a running distance, make your appeal as quietly and dramatically as possible. "Oh... Mr./Mrs. so-and-so, we have information regarding..... which could prove sensational, Would you care to comment?"
- c) But be courteous: "We know there are two sides to every story. We want to hear yours".
- d) Some times nothing works better like an appeal to a person's sympathy. To interview a survivor of a tragedy, you might explain how uncomfortable you feel asking questions, and, how sorry you feel for him. But say, "could you please tell us what Chitra (the victim) was like? Do you have a picture?"

Good planning makes the interview successful and leaves happy memories for both — the interviewer and the interviewee.

4.8.2 Conducting an Interview

Know your subject, in this case, the interviewee, so that you can size him/her up, with some reliability, in a matter of seconds. Is the person being honest? What is (s) he trying to hide? Read the person's eyes, and mannerisms since these offer a reliable clue on how an interview is to be handled. Draw up a list of ten questions. But remember, an interview rarely goes as planned. The interviewer, therefore, requires a lot of instinct. The persons who knows when and how to ask questions based on one's sheer instinct would be able to save an interview anytime.



4.9 HOW TO ESTABLISH RAPPORT WITH THE INTERVIEWEE

- a) In many small and big ways, try to make your interviewee feel nice, cheerful and important.
- b) Outline your reasons for being there. Bring the interviewee up-to-date on what you are looking for.
- c) Start with a board question. This helps you to size the person and collect your thoughts. It also gives you an opportunity to receive information which you may not have anticipated.
- d) Stick to the subject. Do not ramble or chit-chat. Neither is it advisable to beat around the bush. So go ahead and simply ask your questions straight-away.
- e) Doodling or writing down a lot of useless matter in your notebook can be helpful. Those who have important information to transmit, like to feel they are being recorded. Even so, try not to con your interviewee in this manner for too long! You might be asked to show what you have taken down! For all that, jotting down points helps you to prepare the transcription of the interview-session for publication.
- f) Listen. Listen. Listen. Not only does this make the interviewee feel good and wise, but it also helps you to control the interview. An interviewer might start speaking with good intentions and slowly digress. You can bring him back to point. "You were saying something about the time you were in college, prison, etc. When was that?" And you are back on the track.
- g) Be understanding. Nobody likes insensibility. The interviewee is often quite nervous while discussing his/her wrong doings, sin or tragedy. Help him/her to relax. If your mind goes blank, just say, "Excuse me. I forgot where we were and what I need to ask".

Check Your Progress 4

Note: i) Answer the questions in the space provided below.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) Write two advantages a reporter may have if he/she uses an audio cassette recorder during an interview.

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- 2) Why should a reporter ask permission to use a cassette recorder?

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- 3) How does taking note during an interview help a reporter?

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- 4) Give four tips on how a reporter should conduct himself during an interview.

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4.10 LET US SUM UP

- Interviewing is one of the key inputs in reporting for the media, both print and electronics.
- Interviewing can be on the record or off the record.
- Interviewing is aimed at eliciting specific information. It is not a fishing expedition where you get what you net.
- Interviews have therefore to be prepared for in detail. Research on the person and on the issue involved, the physical preparation like audio-video recording, etc., is half the battle won.
- It pays to discuss with the interviewee what you want from the interview and what use you want to make to the information.
- It is the proper tactic to make the interviewee do most of the talking. The interviewer should be a good listener most of the time but skillfully direct an interview to the area about which he wants the talking to be done.
- The personal credibility of the interviewer should be appreciated. That is, the interviewer should be sure that confidences will be kept and only that information will be published which is meant to be published.
- The interviewer must take notes of important points and questions. This will help the interviewer from making any distortion.

4.11 GLOSSARY

Cross-check	: to verify a statement made by one source from another independent source.
Editing	: deciding which parts of an interview should or should not be used.
Equanimity	: evenness of temper; composure.
Idiosyncrasies	: modes of behaviour peculiar to a person(s).
Interview	: a face to face or telephonic conversation between a reporter wanting information on a particular issue and a person who can give it.
Interviewee	: the person from whom information is sought by a reporter through an interview.
Interviewer	: the reporter or media person seeking information through an interview.
Pedantic	: parading of book-learning or technical knowledge.

4.12 FURTHER READING

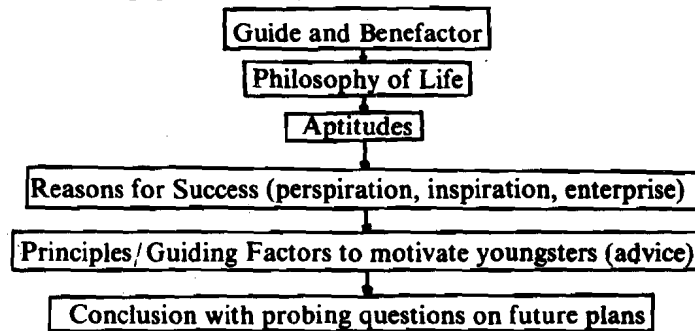
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4.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

Dates, Facts, figures of important events in life (like birth, schooling, college and further studies, marriage, family, one's background, other details of achievements and highpoints in life)



Check Your Progress 2

- Adopt the direct approach via telephone.
- Take the indirect approach, by first facing the 'protector' in the form of a family member or personal secretary of the 'would-be' interviewee.
- Go uninvited and seek clarifications urgently.
- Wait and bid one's time to conduct the interview without prior appointment. Other methods in this approach are stated in the next two points.
- Shoot questions impromptu and invite replies.
- Courteously request the person for her/his point of view.

Check Your Progress 3

1) Other reasons for opening an interview with a broad question:

- make the interviewee relax and answer the first question with ease as if to set the trend for the entire interview.
- to help lead the audience (readers/listeners/viewers) into the crux of the interview, to elicit a general statement that would attract and hold the attention of the target audience.

In the cognitive process, it is an accepted method to proceed from the known to the unknown.

2) Note-taking helps in case a technical snag develops in the recording equipment. Taking notes helps one to concentrate on the answers of the interviewee. It ensures against distortion.

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) By using audio cassette recorder, a reporter
 - (1) can keep the exact quotation of the interviewee and
 - (2) he can listen to the whole interview time and again to gather the salient points.
- 2) An interview may not like to be on record for various reasons. Hence, permission from the interviewee is essential.

3) Taking notes during an interview helps a reporter:

- to concentrate on the salient points of the interviewee;
- to show the interviewee that his/her words are important; and
- to organise the whole content of the interview.

4) ● Have good and respectful words for your interviewee.

- Positive gestures may help to build a rapport with the interviewee.
- Attentively listen to her/him
- Avoid arguments.