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English 10

Ms. Courtney

Conduct an Interview

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| Think about someone you know who would be an interesting person to interview about how they are dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. This might be a family member or friend who is doing something really creative to pass the time; it may be a front-line worker; it might be someone who endured a difficult event; it might be someone who celebrated an occasion differently than usual; etc.Using the information below, as well as the five Ws we studied last week, come up with a list of interview questions that would help you to get that person’s full story. Then, conduct the interview. This can be in-person (if they are within your bubble), over the phone, or through FaceTime, Skype, etc. Save all of the information you gather, as we will be using it during next week’s assignment.  |

How to Conduct an Interview

When conducting an interview, you are going to get your best and most current information by interviewing someone directly involved. Contact this person to request an interview and then agree to a time that is convenient for the two of you. Be sure to be polite by saying “please” and “thank you” when making this request. There are particular guidelines that should be followed in order to ensure the interview is both thorough and professional.

1. **Be Prepared**
* When you get the opportunity to meet with this person for an interview, it is important to be prepared. This means having your questions made up ahead of time. It will demonstrate that you are professional and it will help you to keep the interview on track.
* Do your homework before you conduct the interview so that you are able to dig deep with your questioning. This requires a lot of research ahead of time.
* Prepare a list of 15 questions and go over them thoroughly before the interview. It can be helpful to practice them out on someone else first so you become very comfortable with what you’ll be asking.
* Ask open-ended questions. These are questions that cannot be answered with a simple “*yes”* or “*no*.” Be sure your questions require explanation. This is how you learn the Five Ws: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

Some questions you ask will be obvious like: *How have you been spending your time during the COVID-19 pandemic?*

Others will require more thought such as: *In what ways do you think you will be personally transformed after this pandemic has ended?*

Think about information your audience would like to know: *What has been the most challenging aspect of going to work so far?*

Save your toughest questions for the end. You want to ease the person into the interview and allow them to become comfortable. Otherwise, they might shut the interview down.

* Be on time for your interview. Show up or call exactly when you said you would. It’s important to not keep the person waiting.
* Have all the necessary materials you require for the interview such as: a recording device, pen, paper, clipboard, etc.
1. **Be a Good Listener**
* Demonstrate that you are genuinely interested in the subject matter. You do this by maintaining good eye contact, nodding, asking follow-up questions, laughing if they say something funny, showing concern if they are talking about a difficult situation, etc. Listen carefully to never ask a question that has already been answered.
* Allow plenty of time for the person to answer each question. Don’t be too quick to move on to the next.
* Let the questioning be natural like a conversation. Avoid reading through the questions like a checklist.
* Remember to be polite. Don’t interrogate and don’t interrupt.
1. **Take Notes**
* You can record the interview (if the person approves) or you can take notes. Don’t worry about getting every single word the person says, but get all the important details. If you require a few moments to jot your information down, say, “*That’s a good point. Let me just copy that down.”*
* Double-check names, titles, ages, addresses, and spelling before you wrap up the interview.
* Once the interview has concluded, go over your notes and jot down anything else you can remember that you didn’t have time to copy down while the interview was taking place. It’s important to do this immediately after the interview to avoid forgetting essential details.
1. **Is There Anything Missing?**
* Once you’ve conducted the interview, you may require a bit more information from some other people. Ask yourself the following questions?
* Who is missing from this story?
* Have I gotten all sides of the story?
* Where can I go to get another point of view on the story?
* You may find you will need to contact the person’s family members, employer, coworkers, friends, neighbors, etc. to obtain the full story.

*References:*

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