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ENGL-111X F14

Do’s and Don’t’s of Research Interviews

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| DO!1. Prepare your questions in advance.
2. Ask questions about things that confuse you in your research or that you are looking for but cannot find.
3. Prioritize questions that you cannot answer through other sources.
4. Strategically order your questions – the most broad come first, more specific later.
5. Have an idea of the information you hope to get out of a question. If your “expert” does not give this info, you may want to rephrase or ask a follow-up question.
6. Introduce yourself and summarize your research project at the beginning of the interview.
7. Strategically re-order your interview questions as you proceed through the interview.
8. Write down your impressions of the interview as soon as it is over, while it is still fresh in your mind.
 | DON’T!1. Do a phone interview if you have the option of in-person; don’t do an email interview if you can do a phone or in-person one.
2. Ask unanswerable questions or questions that your “expert” is unlikely to be able to answer.
3. Create questions that have yes/no answers.
4. Ask controversial questions first; save them for the end lest they cause your interview to sour!
5. Hesitate to ask for a break in the interview if you need time to take down a quote, review your questions, or ask a clarifying question.
6. Confuse facts vs. opinions presented by your interviewee.
7. Forget to take notes and/or record your interview.
8. Forget to thank your interviewee.
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