



The Art of Interviewing

Introduction

As the second module within the specialized Journalism curriculum, this module serves as an introduction to the art of interviewing. The students will get a good idea of how to interview anyone for any specific situation.

Objectives

1. Students will be introduced to interviewing.
2. Students will be given the opportunity to understand why they may be afraid of interviewing.
3. Students will go through multiple activities including a case study.

Agenda

1. Why Interview?
2. Case Study Time!!
3. Conclusion

Facilitation Notes

1. Make sure to help students get out of their comfort zones with some of the activities.
2. Try to facilitate a discussion for the Why Interview? activity.

Activities

Why Interview? (10-15 minutes)

Purpose:

TEACH THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERVIEWING

Materials:

N/A

Directions:

1. Ask students: What's your favorite scary movie? or When do you feel really afraid?
2. Explain to students that the interview process can seem intimidating, but today's lesson will give them the tools they need to be successful.
3. Explain to students that part of a reporter's job is to interview people they don't know for stories.
4. Ask: Have you ever called someone you didn't know? What did you like and dislike about it?

5. Students share stories of their experiences, if they have them.
6. Cold-calling is the practice of calling someone you don't know to get information from them.
7. Ask: Why might cold-calling seem scary or uncomfortable for some people?
8. Students generate reasons and share their feelings. Acknowledge these fears. Learning to make cold calls takes practice. People get better at it with practice.

Discussion:

1. Why is interviewing important?
2. Where is it used constantly?

Case Study Time!! (30 minutes)

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to show a couple of data visualizations that are quite cool in order for the students to get an idea of what data journalism is really about.

Materials:

[Worksheet A](#)

[Worksheet B](#)

Directions:

Go over the following instructions with students:

In this role-playing activity, students are divided the class into groups of three. They get a worksheet that provides a scenario with a hypothetical reporter and source. Two team members role-play an interview while the third team member, the evaluator, offers coaching and suggestions as they practice. Assign each group to a case #, and make sure that they follow that one specifically.

One person will be the journalist, one will be the source, and the third person will serve as an evaluator for both participants. Read aloud the directions and encourage students to work together as a team to generate ideas and practice role-playing.

Because some students are pretending to be experts and others are pretending to be journalists, give students the opportunity to use the Internet to gather information to make their role-playing more credible. This will also help to make their performances less silly and more realistic. Encourage them to use creativity and imagination along with good research to create a strong cold-calling simulation.

Time to Practice

Before beginning, review the advice provided on the worksheet for both the journalist and source. Make sure students can explain in their own words why this advice makes sense and

encourage them to make notes of their own that are relevant to the topic they are interviewing about or are the interviewee.

Monitor students as they work and answer any questions they may have. Encourage them to practice a couple of times so they're comfortable. For advanced learners, you may want to encourage the source to vary their answers at each rehearsal, so that the reporter really has to think on their feet!

Time for Performance

Each team performs their cold calls. Encourage evaluators from other teams to offer “warm” and “cool” feedback. Warm feedback is positive and acknowledges strengths. Cool feedback offers comments and suggestions to help the learner reflect and improve.

Leaving a Message

If you call a source and they are not available you might have to leave a message. In this message you should identify yourself, your school or affiliation, your reason for calling and a way for your source to contact you. See [Worksheet B](#) for a script template

Discussion:

1. What did you learn from working on this project? What did you like best about it? What did you dislike and why?
2. How might cold-calling be useful in your life right now? In the future?

Conclusion (15 minutes)

Purpose:

Reflect on everything that was taught.

Materials:

N/A

Directions:

1. Conclude the module and ask students what they learned
2. Make sure to gloss over the key points that were taught and perhaps even talk about other implications of journalism such as using twitter to get in touch with people, and just bring it back in general to talk about journalism's importance.