

More Than Scientists Interview Checklist

Are you as prepared as you can possibly be for this interview?

- Do you know where you are going? Be sure to arrive on time.
- Do you have a copy of interview questions?
- Do you have the release form for the scientist to sign (IMPORTANT!)
- Have you communicated adequately with your interviewee? (sent them interview questions, talked to them about setting, subject matter, time frame, etc. beforehand)
- Have you coordinated with your film partners?
- Is camera battery charged?
- Is there a memory card in the camera?
 - Is it formatted?
- Are you confident in the use of your video and audio equipment? (if not, practice!)
- Are you ready to be professional and presentable?

To bring to interview:

- Camera(s)
- Lav mic (with fresh battery!)
- Shotgun mic if shooting with 2 cameras (you can check these out from TAM as well)
- Tripod(s)
- Interview notes
- Release form

Video settings on camera

- 1920x1080 resolution
- 24 frames per second (24p)

If shooting in manual (if you're shooting in Auto, don't worry about these):

- Check white balance
- Set shutter speed: if shooting at 24p, should be 1/50
- Set ISO and aperture for proper exposure (and keep ISO as low as possible)

Camera and seating set-up

- The subject, the interviewer, and the camera must be at the same eye level. Don't have the camera looking up or down at the subject, and don't have the subject looking up or down away from the camera. Adjust the tripod so the camera lens is at their eye level, and arrange the interviewer's seat or stand to the same effect.
- If you will have the subject talking directly to the video's viewers, position the interviewer directly behind the camera. The subject will then talk to the camera and the viewers will feel like he/she is talking to them (most MTS interviews are done this way and in practice it works easily). When posing the questions you'll stand up and talk face-to-face, but then sit/stand back behind the camera for their responses.
- If you will have the subject talk to the interviewer rather than the video's viewers, then the interviewer must be seated/standing *right next* to the camera. Make sure the camera sees them face-on; otherwise it will produce a weak video that does not draw viewers in.

Interview set-up

- Setting makes sense in context of subject matter
- Lighting is good (no harsh shadows)
- Framing is good (remember rule-of-thirds)
- No distracting elements
- Lav mic hidden
- Be clear with subject about where they will be looking when they answer
- Encourage the subject to incorporate the question into their answers since the interviewer will be edited out.

Audio set-up

- Turn lav mic on
- In settings menu, set audio recording to manual and **have interviewee speak normally**. Set audio so that peaks approach -12dB but do not higher.
- If shooting with 2 cameras, use a shotgun mic on the second camera, and set audio so that peaks don't go over -12dB when interviewee speaks normally.

Video set-up

- Recheck composition (make sure there's not a ton of empty space!)
- Ensure subject is in perfect focus

Recording

- Start both cameras at same time (doesn't need to be perfect)
- Leave several seconds at beginning and end of clips
- Playback (and listen!) after first clip to make sure there are no issues

During interview

- Be sure to engage the subject on their personal thoughts, feelings, motivations. People aren't interested in another update on the state of climate change – but they are interested in what it means to this scientist as a person – why they personally care, what it will mean for the future, why they're concerned.
- Listen! Pay attention to interviewee's words and tone, as well as any distracting sounds (these cameras unfortunately don't have earphone ports, so the only surefire way to make sure audio is good is to listen on-camera between clips)
- Ask interviewee to repeat answers if necessary

At end of interview

- Do you have all the content that you need?
- Are you SURE?
- Release form signed?**
- Thank interviewee for their time
- Remind interviewee that you will show them the video for their approval before anything gets posted