

You And The Broadcast Media

Getting ready for an interview and being interviewed requires a certain commitment and may take up some of your time. And it's not easy, it's nerve-wracking, it carries a certain element of risk.

So why put yourself through it?

Very simply, you stand to gain much more by putting yourself forward for interview than by standing back.

Every interview is an opportunity.

It can promote you, your company, or your product.

It can boost your authority and standing by presenting you as an expert in your particular field.

It can limit damage if there's a problem or a crisis. After all, if there is a problem for you or your company, who better to put the record straight than you?

Why would they want to talk to you?

You are very important to the broadcasters. You can lend a report authority by agreeing to a pre-recorded interview. Or you can provide a valuable contribution to a programme with a live interview, telling the audience something important and perhaps something they simply didn't know. Or, in the case of a crisis, you can provide reassurance, information and if necessary sympathy.

Remember, you are the expert - the broadcasters aren't. They need you.

So what do they really want?

Basically, they want a story - that is, simply, something that will catch the attention and interest of the listeners or viewers, and persuade them to tune in again at the same time tomorrow.

But there are different types of stories.

If you've got something new or some good news, that's fine. Journalists don't always look for the dark side - BUT it must be new, different, relevant to the audience of the programme.

If it's a crisis, the journalist will react differently. Within hours of a crisis occurring, journalists won't expect a great deal of detail or much analysis, but they will expect to hear from you. Silence breeds suspicion. Later, they'll expect a fuller, franker assessment of what has happened. But you can do yourself and your company a lot of good, by putting your head above the parapet, being as honest as possible, and making it clear that you're not sitting back and letting the crisis drive you into the ground.

On the other hand, perhaps the journalist just wants to draw on your expertise - using you and your knowledge to enlighten the audience. In which case, you must have all the facts the journalist needs, present them in a way the audience will understand, and deliver those facts with energy and enthusiasm.

About the Author

Graham Leach has spent 30 years working in broadcast news, both studio presenting and reporting from world hot spots and now works at [HarveyLeach](#) providing international [media training](#).