



TOP 10 TIPS

FOR PRO PODCAST

Interviews

TOOLS FOR PODCASTING EXCELLENCE



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About the Author

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Brad has been creating award-winning audio programs for almost 2 decades. He's added his magic touch to documentaries, dramas, comedies, current affairs, sports and music programs and podcasts.

Building these different brands have opened up interview opportunities with people from every walk of life, from all over the world, in multiple languages.

Brad's training and mentorship programs have been presented locally and internationally to much acclaim; upskilling podcasters, radio and online presenters and producers.

"From the moment I walked into the studio, I knew this interview was going to be different, and it was!"

"His knowledge of my career surprised me, and he asked such clear cut questions...It was the best interview of my career."

"I have never, never enjoyed such a professional and fun interview!"

"Interviewers like Brad are a rarity nowadays!"

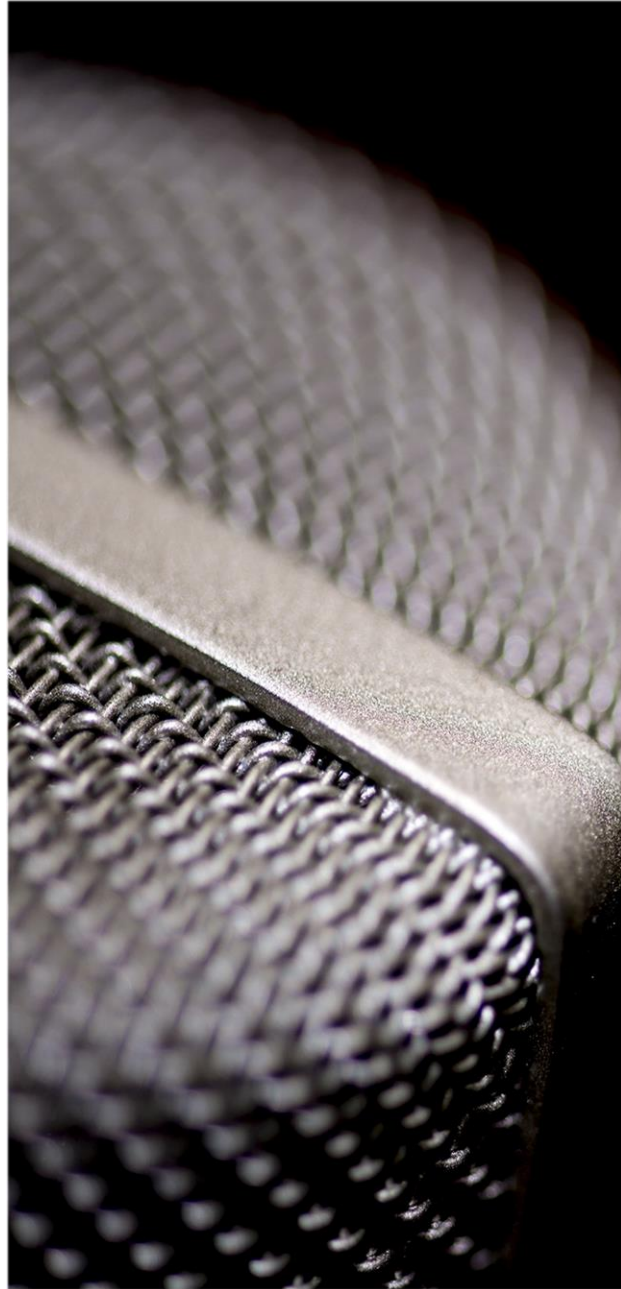
"As a publicist, if there is 1 interviewer that I always take my artists to, it's Bradley!"



"We all have a story to tell...let me teach you to how to tell yours."

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Introduction

I absolutely love interviewing people. I've been doing it nearly every day for the last – I don't know – but it feels like forever! From politicians to Grammy Award winners, movie directors to entrepreneurs, and community leaders to international sporting heroes, and every other conceivable thing in between. They are, at the end of the day, just people like you and me, doing what they do best. (even if they don't seem *anything* like us!)

In planning and then doing GREAT interviews that will GROW your Podcast audience, there are a few basics you cannot avoid. Your dynamic personality and your general knowledge can only get you so far, and I think we can all agree that none of us wants our reputations and our Podcast's integrity to crash and burn. It *can* happen, and it takes just one careless moment to undo all of your hard work and audience building and it's something from which a young podcast might never recover.





TIP: 01

What's Your Goal?



Tip 1:

What's Your Goal?

You'll never get into your car, ready for a road trip, and when someone asks you where you're going, you say: "Hmm, I actually have no idea!" You'll know where you want to go, and the best road to get you there, even if you take the scenic route! The same with an interview. If you have a podcast on, let's say, 'Entrepreneurship challenges and how to overcome them', you would need to ask yourself at least the following questions:

- a) What 'Entrepreneur Challenge' will we deal with in this episode according to my Podcast Planner, and what do I want my audience to know at the end of the episode they might not have known before?
- b) What are some of the key questions or ideas I can write down that will form the basis of my planning to answer the previous point?
- c) Who is the right person to help us answer this Big Question?

This takes us immediately to our next TIP...



TIP: 02

Get the Right Guy



Tip 2:

Get the Right Guy...or Gal

Staying with our example of a show that deals with Overcoming Entrepreneurship Challenges, it's very unlikely that you'll be speaking to your buddy Jim, who is working on his first ever business plan, and hasn't even launched his first business yet. He might be a hoot behind the mic, and you might get some feel-good theories and a bit of gurgling on some stuff Jim's read online, but he won't be the right guy, based on the goal of your Podcast, will he? And you'll be surprised at how many people go for this kind of option...why, because getting a 'Jim' is easy.

But we want to grow our Podcast and that means we need the RIGHT person, with the RIGHT credentials, and the RIGHT information, to set our listeners on the RIGHT path. That's your program's integrity, right there.

Being excellent and having a 'can't miss it' kind of podcast, means you've got to put in the hard yards, and do the planning. So, build that Database of yours, and simply call up a better person for the interview. Now you know the goal and you know the person to take you there; now you need a plan and then to roll it into action.



TIP: 03

Do Your Homework



Do Your Homework Thoroughly

Let's name our interviewee: Paul. Paul's got the experience and the credentials to give you the kind of info that will hopefully answer your show's Big Question. You've made contact with him, and he's both willing and available to answer your questions, and you've set up the date for the recording. You're convinced it's going to add amazing value to your podcast. Well, yes and no. He might be the guy with the know-how, but unless you draw that knowledge out of him in a structured and intelligent way, keeping your goal in mind, you could end up with awkward silences and moments of just staring at each other, or worse...babbling on a road to nowhere.

So, ask Paul for a short biography, making sure he knows what you want to get out of the interview, and ensure he sends relevant bits of information and sticks to the outline of what you expect. Now it's up to you to check out social media, business pages and websites to get the tid bits that can really steer the conversation into an interesting direction and keep your listeners glued!

And yes, there's plenty of space for interesting side conversation, as long as you have that proverbial highway to get back onto, to reach your 'destination', in the allotted time.



TIP: 04

Choose Your Style



Choose Your Style

Many many years ago, I was auditioning for a radio slot on an international radio station. I was young and still trying to find my feet in the industry and find my own unique sound, and at that time I was doing a lot of voice over work. In the audition I was given a few minutes to prepare an interview on a topic their panel would provide and I'd need to prepare and 'interview' one of the managers who would pretend to be, well, whomever I suggested. The interview was to be on the topic of malaria infection rates in Sub Saharan Africa and the manager was to pretend he was a health care professional from the U.N...or something like that.

So, I launched into it, beyond nervous, and wanting to make a good impression, but my tone was completely wrong. I was sharing statistics on the number of child deaths in Sub Saharan African as if I was selling the latest washing machine to prospective buyers. It was an inappropriate style, with the wrong tone and nervous or not nervous, it was cringe-worthy. I could see it on their faces. They would bring that moment up often, to my embarrassment, when telling new presenters how *not* to act in a sensitive, and emotive interview environment. Many years have passed since then and I learned much from that day.

Don't make the same mistake. If the scene required drama, give it drama. If it needs pregnant pauses and sighs or laughter and side slapping, just make sure it's appropriate.



TIP: 05

Be Authentic



Be Authentic

This might seem an odd tip. After all, who else could I be, but me? We all have a mentor, or at least someone in our industry that we look up to. With all the access we have to media it could really be anyone from anywhere in the world, on any platform. One of my favourites is Guy Raz from NPR. One of the podcasts he hosts is HOW I BUILT THAT. I once binge listened to them, and the next day I was presenting a talk radio program. There was a point where I realised I was trying to sound like Guy! Not the worst thing, but I could feel that I wasn't being, well, me!

It's happened to me on another occasion after watching a few motoring show episodes featuring Jeremy Clarkson. I was creating strange metaphors for everything, just like he does, and I even noticed my intonation was affected! Crazy! We need to look up to and allow ourselves to learn and grow and be inspired by the big-time professionals out there, but we can't rob our listeners of, *us*! We bring so much uniqueness and personality, and our own brand, so let's be authentic....



TIP: 06

Listen



Listen to Your Guest

Live radio creates opportunities for way too many distractions. I admit that there have been moments in my 2 decade long on-air career where I had to move my attention away from the guest for just a moment to deal with something in the crazy, mad, busyness of breakfast radio. I returned to the interview, and asked my next question. Then these dreaded words: 'Yes, so like I *just said*...' He had already just mentioned part of that answer in his previous comments and I didn't hear it, because I was diverted for the slightest moment!

Respect the guest and listen. In Podcasting, there is potentially way less pressure, but you just peer down to check your levels, or the time on the screen, or your notes, and you miss something. Also, they might drop a gem in their answer that your prep work never brought to light that you can ask them to elaborate on, and who knows, it could be the highlight of your episode!

Stay focussed.



TIP: 07

Talk Less, Write More



Tip 7:

Talk Less, Write More

This flows nicely from Tip 6, but also reminds us that paying attention is one thing, it's another thing altogether to keep keyword notes all along the way. Those keywords can form part of extra questions, or simply get you to say: "Tell me more about that!" (referring to a thought you wrote down). These notes can also give us extra insight to the interviewee's interests and thoughts that go beyond this particular episode, and can spurn ideas for future collaborations.

Remember, content creation is our obsession, and how we can get more 'distance' out of people that already believe in what we do, is essential. (more on this in Tip 9)



TIP: 08

Get to the Point



Tip 8:

Get to the Point. No Fluff

You should rather sit with the situation where your conversation is going on so well, you need to create a Part 2, then to blab on to make your episode length. This is all part of your planning, but it can happen that the interview is rocking and you don't want to put the brakes on something so special too soon.

Rather create a 'to be continued' type episode and create the appropriate hype around the release of the next episode, and use that as leverage. You should be so well planned, and be so attentive to your guest, that fluff and babble don't even have a place to surface.



TIP: 09

Land the Interview



Land the Interview, Safely

You're almost done, and it's time to wrap up the interview. This is almost as important as that first question. It's something you should have planned for. You should know what it's going to be. It could be a summary, it could be an actual question that draws things logically to a close, or it could be a trademark feature that's unique to your show. I choose depending on the guest and kind of interview, but I want to make it memorable, or at least interesting. I once had our nation's Chief Justice in the studio, together with his entourage and security detail. Based on the serious style of the interview, I could have ended it fairly seriously, and wrapped it up in the same vein, and it would have worked, but I decided to swing this to the other side completely.

We had just dealt with conversations around corruption, lawlessness, and the desperation that exists in our nation, but I purposely swung to a closing conversation around 'hope, in spite what we see around us.' We needed to end on an uplifting note. We owed it to our listeners. On top of that, I decided to land the interview with a silly quiz; again...PLANNED!

I asked the Chief Justice what he would choose to have on the grill at a barbeque if he came over to my house. I asked him whether he preferred cheering for our national football or rugby side, and that I was off to put the kettle on, and I wanted to know if he wanted me to make him tea or coffee...in the interview! He seemed to be caught off guard at first, but he totally went with it! It was so much fun seeing this man that's mostly spotted wearing long black robes and making enormous judgments that effect our entire nation, now giggling and talking about corn and pork chops! It was priceless. He loved it, and it all took less than 1 minute. It was the perfect landing and people still talk about it. — 6



TIP: 10

Think Long-Term



Tip 10:

Think Long-Term

Finally: Podcasters are personalities, and experts and talkers, and visionaries and thinkers, but above that, we are simply; Content Creators. It doesn't sound glamorous, but it's a fact.

The key to longevity is planning and ingenuity. So, in every call to your database, think: longevity. "I can see from your bio, that you also love fly fishing! After we've chatted about being a 'Late Bloomer in Business' for our current series, can I get in touch again for next season? I'm doing a series on 'Stress Relievers for Entrepreneurs' and you'd be great for that! May I pencil you in for another interview when we get there in a few months' time?"

Every interview can offer up something new for what you're planning, or it gives you an idea for a future series! Always think: Longevity!



BONUS TIP!

Keep Control



BONUS TIP!

Keep Control

I love giving extra value, so here's a bonus tip: Every now and again you'll have a very strong personality on the other side of the desk or the telephone line. You'll find it often if you interview a fellow podcaster or media personality or a politician, or even a musician. They have a lot to say, have strong opinions and they can easily take control of the interview. Don't let that happen! It's YOUR interview, NOT theirs. Stay in control. Interject. Divert. Say something that will stun them. Force your next question. Stay calm and stay in control and keep your flow! And if they start asking *you* questions, don't go down that rabbit hole (unless you can see that it will add value to the program) but turn things back to your guest, and regain control.

They may not be vindictive, or even trying to be distracting and destructive, it's just their strong personalities. Use it to your advantage, but stay in control. The drama can give you plenty of ammo to create social media teasers, and drive audience to your next episode to hear it all play out!

Final Thoughts...

Great interviews will give your Podcast an edge. Build a top notch data base, backed with great planning and forecasting, and your production will soar, standing out from your competition.

Doing great interviews can easily bring experts back again for more of their input and expertise, also excitedly sharing the details of others in their networks who you could call, effectively doing your work for you!

Keep striving for excellence and consistency; the true currency of success in audio creation!

Happy Podcasting!

If you'd like more of my "Top Ten Tip" resources for help with program planning, production and more, be sure to visit www.mypodcastmentor.com

And keep an eye on your inbox for news on my upcoming webinars and coaching series.

If you'd like to have this eBook in audio form, please let me know.

