

The following are basic interviewing principles. Although not an exhaustive list, these principles represent basic elements of sound data collection for the interview method.

## Basic Interviewing Principles

- 1) Understand the subject matter that the interview will cover
- 2) Dress appropriately for the setting and person you are interviewing
- 3) Have integrity; be honest with the purpose of the interview
- 4) Keep the purpose of the interview in the forefront of your mind
- 5) Follow the directions provided
- 6) Keep your opinions to yourself
- 7) Take a conversational tone, encourage free and open responses
- 8) Make every effort to obtain answers to all questions and probe for further detail if necessary
- 9) Be respectful, practice patience and tact
- 10) Be sensitive to cultural nuances
- 11) Pay attention to accuracy and detail
- 12) Exhibit a real interest in the inquiry, practice good listening skills
- 13) Keep control of the interview, make every effort to keep your schedule
- 14) Review your questions before ending the interview. You may want to say something like, "Now let's see if we've got everything," to allow you to do so
- 15) Show your appreciation by thanking the interviewee when you are finished
- 16) Complete your notes, provide as much detail as you can, and check for accuracy
- 17) Respect the interviewee's right to confidentiality

## Basic Reminders of What NOT to Do

- 1) Offer comments which may place a value judgment on a response
- 2) Allow your tone of voice to betray your thoughts
- 3) Interrupt a response, even if it is not relevant to the question or purpose of the interview
- 4) Superimpose your own point of view to answers that are vague

Adapted from the text: *Exploring Marketing Research*, Zickmund, William G., 2003  
*Evaluating Collaboratives*, Taylor-Powell, Ellen, 1998