

Principles of Good Interviewing

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