

# ASKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS

After learning to hold the microphone and speaking in front of everyone, we offer an activity to explore with participants good practices in the art of asking and answering questions.



**Duration** 5 to 10 minutes

**Participants** 5 to 10

- Goals**
- Ask about the role and posture of the journalist during an interview
  - Think about how to ask questions that enrich the discussion and spark debate
  - Explore what makes an answer interesting or not

## Materials

- Flipchart sheet
- Markers

## Instructions

- 1 Explain to participants that you are going to ask yourself “How do you ask ‘good’ questions as a journalist?”. People can start from the experience they just had on the microphone, but they can also reflect on shows they enjoy.
- 2 Record the answers on a flipchart. Complete their answers with our list of tips in the appendix.
- 3 Then, collectively ask yourself, “What makes an answer rich and interesting?”
- 4 Record the answers on a flipchart. Complete their answers with our list of tips in the appendix.

## Tips for facilitators

- 1 How attendees will ask and answer questions is key to the quality of your show, so allow time for this step.
- 2 You can also show participants the videos produced as part of the SNAP project on this issue.
- 3 You can come back to this list after moments of conversation at the microphone. Ask participants if they would like to complete it, if anything was missing, if these tips helped them, etc.

## Evaluation

How attendees will ask and answer questions is key to the quality of your show, so allow time for this step. You can also show participants the videos produced as part of the SNAP project on this issue.

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# Appendix

## # 01 The role of the journalist

### **TIP N ° 1**

Ask open-ended questions (that is, the answer to which is neither “yes” or “no”). For example, don’t ask “Do you like movies?” but rather “What is the last film that particularly touched you?”

### **TIP N ° 2**

To help you, get inspiration from 5W in English: what, where, when, who, why (What? Where? When? Who? Why?).

### **TIP N ° 3**

Don’t ask overly complex questions. The question should be simple and easily understandable. Try to make each question only one idea at a time.

### **TIP N ° 4**

Encourage the person in front of you to give specific anecdotes. Encourage the person to share his or her personal experiences. For example, rather than asking stay-at-home moms “How do you feel about parenthood?” Ask them “What moment in time was mom the hardest, and what moment was the most rewarding?”

### **TIP N ° 5**

Journalists need to know how to make the person they interview comfortable.

Listen actively to the answers of your interlocutor. Nod from time to time. Bounce back on what just said. Have open non-verbal communication to put the person you are interviewing at ease: don’t cross your arms and legs, turn to face him / her, smile, Breathe.

### **TIP N ° 6**

Know how to cut off and politely interrupt the person when they digress too much or get lost in long speeches. Bring the person back to the subject of your original question or topic.

### **TIP N ° 7**

Do not forget to have fun with your interlocutor! It’s nice to feel the bond between the different members of a radio set.

## # 02 The role of the interviewee

### **TIP N ° 1**

Do not hesitate to give personal examples, to tell memories, to share your intimacy, to show yourself vulnerable. Highlight our personal experience.

### **TIP N ° 2**

It is important to know that when you are being interviewed you can take the time you need. You also don't have to answer all the questions the journalist asks you. If you feel uncomfortable, or the question seems intrusive, feel free to refuse to answer it.

### **TIP N ° 3**

If you don't have expertise in a particular area, avoid going into a theoretical explanation. Speak first in terms of "I" and your experiences as an individual. On the other hand, if you have this expertise, do not hesitate to share it with the audience!

### **TIP N ° 4**

The ideal is to synthesize your point and not get too lost in the details. Try to get straight to the point with nuances.