

## Tips for Interviewing:

### Before the interview

- Try to find out something about the person ahead of time. This will help you think of questions to ask.
- If you plan to write up the interview, be sure the person understands that others will read it and agrees to that.
- If you want to record the interview, ask the person for permission.
- Write out at least five questions you would like to ask.

### During the interview

- Allow “think time” for the person to respond to your questions. Don’t be afraid of silence.
- Don’t expect the interview to go according to plan. The person may start talking about something you didn’t expect. If that happens, you have to decide if this new direction is worth following. If it is, you may need to throw out your prepared questions and think up different ones. If it’s not worth pursuing, you will need to guide the person back to the topic.
- Use active listening skills:
  - Show that you’re paying attention. Look at the speaker, and use signals like “mm-hmm” to show you are following.
  - Don’t interrupt.
  - Check to make sure you understand. Ask questions to clarify what the speaker said. Sum up what you think you heard.
- As you take notes, write quickly, but legibly, using as much shorthand as you can, such as + for and, w/ for with, etc.

### After the interview

- Thank the person you interviewed.
- As soon as you are alone, go over your notes. Write down anything you missed or didn’t want to write at the time, like “looked sad about being homesick.”
- No later than the next day, write a thank you note and mail it.
- Within 2-3 days, review your recording of the interview.