



# Interview Essentials

Digital P Media's Guide to a Successful Origin Story



Set yourself up for success in post-production.

## Interview Tips

**Warm it Up** - Make sure the person you are interviewing is comfortable. For some, this takes no time at all. For others, it helps to engage in some small talk first. Make sure they know the camera is not rolling to gain their trust.

**Keep it Open** - When you are trying to get to the heart of a story, avoid yes or no questions. One way to get to the subject in story-telling mode is to start with "Tell me about..." Follow up with how and why questions.

**Be Sincere** - If the how and why questions come from a place of genuine interest, you're going to end up with a story that others are also interested in. Prepare for the interview by researching the subject and recording what you'd like to know about their experience.

**Be Patient** - If the subject strays from the question, let it go for a while. Something that starts out as a "tangent," may bring valuable insight. At the same

Most origin stories include interviews. **Sound quality** is important any time you film, and interviews are no exception. When preparing to film, most consider **camera quality**, but equally important is to make sure you have a good **microphone, boom, and recorder** -- and someone who knows how to use them.

**Natural light** is free, but not always easy to work with. A few **lighting basics** can assist with a professional looking setup. A **light kit** that includes **LED Lights will be easy to power and run cool so your subject doesn't get hot during the interview**. For filming outside, **reflectors** help control the light towards your subject and "**flags**" (black cloth stretched around a metal frame) help you block light.

Set yourself up for success in post-production. Filming with **multiple cameras** in interviews does a few things. In post, you gain the ability to transition between close-ups and wide shots. The variety keeps the viewer interested. You can also get close when your subject conveys emotion and disguise transitions when moving from one take to another. Filming **b-roll** helps tell a richer story. Showing the viewer images related to the story is often a lot more powerful than simply listening.

of the story. Don't get too far off track.

**Keep Rolling** - The information flowed and you are at the end of your questions and follow ups. Now what? As you wrap up, the subject often relaxes and has a little time to process or reflect on the story just told. Sometimes you get the best information after the official interview is over.

## Production Tips

**Zip Your Lip** - In normal conversation, we often interject sound to show we are listening. During an interview, nod and use facial gestures, but otherwise, keep silent.

**Listen Up** - Before you begin, listen for any background noise. Sometimes you can turn off a particularly distracting noise, such as a loud air conditioner.

**Light the Way** - If you are filming indoors, avoid shooting towards windows. If you are outside, keep track of the sun. Avoid shadows and direct, overhead light.

**Set the Stage** - Use a stand-in to test the lighting and framing of your interview. The most common interview setup is when the interviewer is positioned right next to the camera. When the subject answers, you can see their full face but they aren't looking directly in the camera.

**Consider a Professional** - You often have only one opportunity to capture quality footage. Investing in professional resources at this phase can pay off big in the long run.

# Location

Consider if you want the location to say something about your subject or if you want to minimize the background. All of these interviews were filmed in the same room at Digital P Media offices, each with distinctly different looks.

