



Interview Tips

Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities

Before:

- ✓ **Develop three to five messages or “talking points.”** These are the main ideas you want to emphasize during your interview. Repeat your main points often to ensure the reporter includes them in the story. Anticipate what questions may be asked and be prepared with answers that include these messages. Include real library customer stories, if you can. Check with the customer to make sure it’s ok to use their story. Find out if they want their privacy protected or if they are willing to be interviewed about their experience.
- ✓ **Learn more about the interview.** Ask the reporter about the goal of his or her story. Will it be live or on tape? If it is a radio interview, will listeners be calling in? If it is a TV talk show interview, will there be other guests?
- ✓ **Understand the reporter’s deadline.** Find out when the reporter must complete his or her story and plan your interview to give the reporter ample time to do so.
- ✓ **Give yourself some time to prepare.** Once you know what a reporter wants to cover and his or her deadline, take some time to prepare before being interviewed.
- ✓ **Relax and focus.** Get to your location or in your chair at work 10 to 15 minutes before your interview. Spend time practicing your core message points. Breathing exercises may feel silly, but they will help you feel calm.

During:

- ✓ **Keep your answers succinct.** Don’t feel compelled to keep talking. When you have covered your message point, stop talking.
- ✓ **Do not look straight at the camera.** Stay focused on the interviewer or the task at hand. If you are showing a customer how to use the Makerspace equipment for a newspaper photographer or television camera, keep your focus on the customer and the equipment.
- ✓ **Do not guess.** If you do not know the answer to a question, it’s all right to say you are not sure. Be sure to find the answer and get back to the reporter as promptly as possible.
- ✓ **Avoid jargon, technical language, and acronyms.** Avoid words that may be unfamiliar to the general public. Try to keep your explanations simple.
- ✓ **Be enthusiastic.** You have a positive story to tell the reporter’s readers, viewers, and listeners. Smile when it is appropriate and let your enthusiasm come through in your voice.

- ✓ **Remember anything you say may appear in the story.** Nothing is “off the record.” Assume from the moment you pick up the phone or walk into an interview, everything you say may be quoted.
- ✓ **Never say “No comment.”** If you can’t comment on a point, emphasize what you can say and return to your points.
- ✓ **Be sure to point out:**
 - You are willing to arrange interviews with individuals and community groups that are benefiting from this project.
 - Share that more information about the specific equipment is available at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/InnovationStudios/Components> or the attached equipment list.
 - Share that this equipment is available in the library through the Library Innovation Studios project, hosted by Nebraska rural public libraries to support community engagement and participatory learning experiences by providing access to technological and innovative learning tools not readily accessible locally. The Nebraska Library Commission, along with partners University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Nebraska Innovation Studio, Nebraska Extension, and Regional Library Systems, are collaborating with local public libraries on the *Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities* project. The project is made possible in part by a National Leadership Grant of \$530,732 awarded to the Nebraska Library Commission by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS grant #LG-95-17-0046-17).
 - Audio/video broadcasts **must include** the tagline, “This project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.” Video broadcasts must display the IMLS logo, available at <https://www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award/grantee-communications-kit/imls-logos>.

After:

- ✓ **Follow up with the reporter with any unanswered questions.** Try to do so in the same day.
- ✓ **Consider sending a thank-you note to the reporter.** This helps you build a good relationship with the media.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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NOTE: Library Innovation Studio equipment in our library for a hosting period of eighteen to twenty weeks, includes components from the following categories:

- **Digital fabrication** (3D printer, laser cutter, vinyl cutter, CNC router);
- **Electronics** (prototype kits, microcontrollers, robotics);
- **Textiles** (heat press, embroidery/sewing machine);
- **Digital media creation** (filmmaking/digital photography);
- **Music technology; and**
- **Specialized software, button maker, laminator and basic hand tools.**