

CHAPTER EIGHT

Planning Your Interview

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- Q. Senator, if you were conducting this interview, what questions would you ask?
- A. I think I'd ask myself, "Why am I so poorly prepared as to make an idiot of myself before thousands of viewers?"

A well-planned interview contains an organizational pattern similar to that of a well-executed news or feature story. In news writing you usually write from the bottom line forward—that is, the most important element first and additional details in more or less descending order of importance. The fact that the king died of a heart attack ranks higher than details of the funeral arrangements.

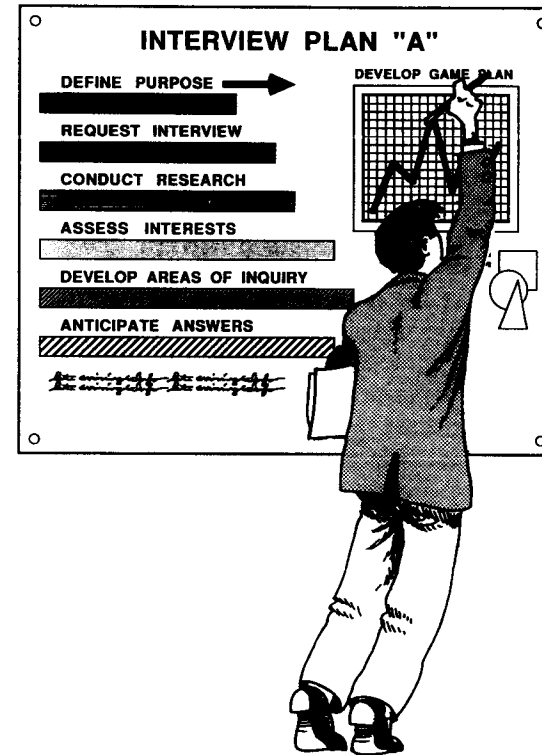
So it is with the interview. Most news interviews open with attempts to discover the essence of a situation or event: What happened and why? Once you understand that essence, you can flesh out the details. You might even begin an interview with the newly elected governor by asking about the "most important issues facing state government this year." Your planned questions would next move on to less important matters.

Other interviews unfold like a feature story: an opening anecdote (light-hearted icebreaking conversation), a statement of theme (conceptual discus-

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sion related to interview's purpose), and then point-by-point elaboration of the theme (covering the points you wish to ask about). Highly focused or thematic interviews unfold this way. You interview a reformed drug addict, Jane Doe, let's say, for a narrow purpose—to develop a magazine article that will help high school teachers and counselors identify symptoms of drug addiction among students. So you direct your questions narrowly to discover those symptoms.

Finally, some interviews work best in chronology. You ask a person who has witnessed a street shooting to "start at the beginning and tell me what happened." Or ask an author, "When did the idea of writing a novel about business ethics first occur to you?" Some interviews unfold almost like a novel, building up through one dramatic discovery after another to reach some climactic revelation.



So the basic organizational patterns for interviewing are (1) inverted pyramid—important matters first, and (2) thematic organization, and (3) chronology. Avoid the hit-and-miss style of interviewing that often characterizes the work of amateurs.

Planning an interview usually involves these seven steps:

1. Defining your purpose
2. Requesting the interview
3. Conducting preinterview research
4. Assessing your source's character and interests
5. Developing specific areas of inquiry
6. Anticipating answers
7. Developing a game plan

PLANNING STARTS WITH PURPOSE

The role of purpose as the key toward conducting fruitful interviews has been emphasized in earlier chapters. It's also the key to planning. But how do you arrive at purpose? It's easy for some news stories. A major hotel fire breaks out, and your interviewing purpose is to get as much detail as you can for the morning edition or the six o'clock news. You ask questions of fire officials and witnesses, guided largely by the needs of an inverted pyramid type of news story, using the five W's along with GOSS, particularly the OSS leading to the obvious G of extinguishing the fire.

Other purposes are more refined and sophisticated. Jon Franklin, a Pulitzer Prize-winning feature writer, looks for story ideas in which the facts resemble the plot line of a work of fiction (Franklin, 1986). Such a plot line, complete with such fiction elements as character, action, tension, and resolution, requires a vastly different interview plan.

The principle, then, is to know precisely what you're looking for. The writer who seeks to include *action* in a feature story will, through interviewing, gather accounts of things happening. They may be melodramatic happenings, such as a firefighter rescuing a child from a precarious perch atop a burning building. Or they could be more internal, such as a narrative account of an executive making a difficult career decision.

For the sake of discussion, let's examine a hypothetical interview with just such an executive, perhaps for a major magazine article or story for the People or Business section of a newspaper. Let's call her Elizabeth Morgan, the chief executive officer of XYZ Corporation, an electronics manufacturing firm that employs 3,000. Purpose starts with asking yourself, why do you want to interview Elizabeth Morgan? Consider some possibilities.

You're a newspaper business editor, and you want to assess the growth of electronics manufacturing in your locality. Morgan is one of a dozen or more executives you'll interview.

You're a feature writer for the People section, and you want to explore how she combines motherhood and career.

You're a reporter and want to investigate rumors of possible work force reductions in the wake of an economic recession.

You're on the staff of *Executive Woman*, a hypothetical magazine edited specifically for women in management positions. You want to write an article about her struggle against odds to reach the top of the corporate ladder in essentially a man's world. Hers is an exemplary story that will inspire your readers.

Such reasons seldom come from nowhere. Rather they grow from small seeds, sometimes a chance remark. The editor of *Executive Woman* goes to a luncheon meeting of business executives and hears talk about the "remarkable turnaround" of XYZ Corporation, once headed for bankruptcy—"until they got that woman in there." And because the editor's job is finding inspirational stories useful to women in management, she immediately takes an interest. "Who is that woman?" she asks, and the editorial game is afoot. The editor learns that Elizabeth Morgan coped with alcoholism, divorce, vicious company politics, bad managerial decisions—"made every mistake in the book"—but somehow learned from her mistakes to emerge as a dark-horse candidate for chief executive officer in a directors meeting two years ago. And she straightened out not only the company but also her personal life. So goes the talk.

From such tenuous beginnings, articles emerge. The idea of an article on Morgan intrigues the editors of *Executive Woman*. What kind of article? Here is where planning becomes essential. You must have a purpose that will serve your readers and that Morgan might logically agree to. The more specific the purpose, the better. That is, an article entitled "Everything you wanted to know about Elizabeth Morgan" has the appeal of a wet dishrag. "Elizabeth Morgan's Struggle to Reach the Corporate Top against Great Odds in a Male-Dominated Field" has more possibilities. Because they circulate to specialized audiences, magazines focus on a precise and compelling theme. They seek out articles that directly affect their readers with advice they can immediately put to use. Based on what we know so far about Elizabeth Morgan, the interview purpose may likely emerge along these lines: What specific things has Elizabeth Morgan learned about management (on both personal and corporate levels) that will help other women learn from her experience, from her mistakes? Imagine a title on the magazine's cover:

"A Corporate Executive Confesses—XYZ's Elizabeth Morgan's Ten Worst Managerial Mistakes and How to Avoid Them."

Magazine articles tend not only to focus sharply on a narrow topic, but the best ones contain what one expert calls "paradox" (Hubbard, 1982). Paradox means things are not what they seem; they defy common-sense expectations. You don't expect an executive to reach the top after all those mistakes, yet here she is. Executives read it because she is the voice of experience sharing insights from which others might learn. This approach is common to magazines, but don't dismiss it as a possibility for a newspaper feature.

REQUESTING AN APPOINTMENT

Will Elizabeth Morgan buy such a purpose? Why should she “confess” anything? Don’t make the mistake of self-censorship. More good ideas are killed by timid journalists afraid to propose a provocative project than by uncooperative respondents.

“Sometimes you get your best material when you pose obvious and bizarre questions,” suggests a *Washington Times* writer, Lisa McCormack. She once called several famous people—Richard Nixon, G. Gordon Liddy, Gerald Ford, to name a few—to ask them their secret “Walter Mitty fantasy.” To the surprise of just about everyone except Lisa McCormack, they talked freely about their fantasies. Gerald Ford imagined himself as a famous baseball player; Liddy saw himself as a World War II fighter pilot. McCormack wasn’t surprised to get so many enthusiastic answers from such busy and important people (Liddy called back twice to expand on his answer and Nixon wrote a personal note). It was a provocative and intriguing question. It was also one that secretaries and aides—the gatekeepers that reporters must get past to reach important people—found so fascinating that they themselves wanted to learn the answer. The celebrities themselves were curious about others’ fantasies, particularly Richard Nixon’s. The former president saw himself performing great music: conducting a symphony orchestra or playing a pipe organ in a great cathedral (*Washington Times*, April 16, 1986).

Some of the VIPs asked McCormack to cite her own fantasy. The trade-off aided the conversation, especially when she confessed an elaborate fantasy of being a fiftyish, tough-but-soft-hearted “big white mama” who runs a New Orleans jazz joint.

The experience suggests that journalists with unique or sharply focused ideas should not hesitate to try. So in the interview with Morgan, we’ll identify ten major managerial mistakes and tell the readers why each mistake is important and how it might be avoided. We will, that is, if she agrees to the proposed purpose.

Requesting an interview appointment requires both advance planning and preliminary preparation. Background reading and preliminary discussions with other business executives can help identify the typical mistakes of managers, both men and women. In this instance, we are interested primarily in those unique to women. Books such as *The Managerial Woman* (Hennig and Jardim, 1977) and *Games Mother Never Taught You* (Harragan, 1977) can help. From the latter you learn that corporate life largely follows the teamwork and organizational structure of athletics and the military. Failure to understand this can contribute to mistakes among women managers.

In short, when you call Morgan for an appointment, you must be prepared to talk knowledgeably about the subject and to answer questions. You can almost anticipate an objection, for instance, to the word “confession.” Yet, the confession is a popular article type among magazine editors, being primarily a case history, or a series of mini case histories, that reads like a short

story and contains a worthwhile lesson. But because the term calls forth visions of sex, sin, and criminal activities, you may meet some resistance.

Consider the request from her perspective, however. Why would Elizabeth Morgan grant a request that she make a public confession of her past mistakes—mistakes that quite possibly will include references to such past tragedies as her alcoholism and her divorce?

A complex set of perceptions runs through her mind. Foremost is the prestige of the magazine. If Morgan holds it in high regard—and if she identifies with other women managers portrayed in previous issues—she may find the prospect rather exciting. She’ll be in excellent company with the Katharine Grahams and Elizabeth Doles already portrayed in the magazine. Second, the editors speak her language. As former managerial women themselves (the only kind of editors the publisher will hire), they talk business with the same expertise as the veteran sportswriter interviewing the young quarterback. Such an interview will truly be an *exchange* of ideas and information. Morgan is perceptive enough to run a multimillion-dollar corporation; she’s also perceptive enough to take note of the way the magazine handles delicate information. Yes, the editors demand a lot of intimate information, but they handle it responsibly and discreetly. Yes, that means she’d probably have to talk about the divorce and alcoholism, but they’re both in the past now, and the prestige of being featured in the magazine will do more to enhance her career than anything she can think of at the moment. It is one thing to “confess” in the *National Enquirer*, quite another in *Executive Woman*. The magazine is upbeat. It stands on her side—that is, it sincerely wants women to succeed in management. The editors dedicate every word toward that purpose—a noble one to say the least. So Morgan may decide to cooperate with a project that will demand a lot, but also yield great benefit by enhancing a cause with which both she and the editors agree.

That would be the ideal. In short, success in securing such an interview depends largely on the reputation of the medium and of the writer conducting the interview. Those with lesser reputations may have to settle for more superficial purposes.

Planning your request involves six steps.

1. By phone, letter, or personal visit, you will outline your project and why you think it’s worthwhile. If she’s important enough to be protected by secretaries and assistants, you may need to make your pitch first to a subordinate.
2. You will suggest reasons why she should agree to it—such as education of the public, helping people achieve, helping women to avoid managerial mistakes. Ego strokes can help, so you suggest that lots of important people are talking about XYZ’s remarkable recovery from the brink of bankruptcy. Managers desperately need her visionary ideas on how to avoid pitfalls. She has been singled out by other executives as uniquely qualified to discuss the points you have in mind.
3. You will anticipate possible objections and develop arguments to overcome them. You negotiate the objections you can’t overcome.

4. You are prepared to engage in preliminary discussion about the topic. "What kinds of mistakes are you talking about?" she may ask. You suggest a few mistakes you've gained from reading and from conversations with managers. "I'm looking for the kinds of mistakes and problems that are unique to women," you say. "For instance, Betty Harragan, in her *Games Mother Never Taught You*, says women don't recognize many of the subtle points about corporate teamwork and structure that men have gained through military service and athletic competition." (Respondents often wish to debate such a point right on the phone—"That's an old-fashioned concept," Morgan says, "a great deal has changed in corporate life since Harragan's book"—and suddenly you both realize that the interview is a go, with only the details to be worked out.)
5. You will arrange time and place and any special conditions. (May a tape recorder be used? May you bring a photographer? May you interview members of her staff or family beforehand?)
6. You offer any points that you may want her to think about prior to the interview. "I hope that together we can identify ten mistakes for the story, but we might want to start with twenty and narrow it down to the best ten." Or, "I hope the article will contain anecdotal examples from your own experience, so I'll be asking for examples as we talk."

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

The whole story of interviewing, suggests author Richard Meryman, "is homework." When he worked for the weekly *Life*, Meryman specialized in personality portraits of celebrities such as Elizabeth Taylor and Hubert Humphrey. *Life* once published an article about his interviewing techniques, and his remarks should inspire all serious journalistic interviewers.

"I keep telling myself that the perfect interview is a perfect set of questions. The older I get, the more time I spend in advance on that list." Meryman does preliminary interviews with people close to his subject, asking and asking questions until "I start hearing things twice." In addition, he reads whatever is already available on the subject, "all the time writing down questions and working out their phrasing." This groundwork averages out to about five hours for every one hour actually spent interviewing the subject.

A few days before meeting with his subject, Meryman becomes absorbed with his condition, in the manner of boxers and decathlon champions. "I don't touch any alcohol at all for about three days before an interview. I try to get a great deal of sleep. I don't eat starch or sugar. I spend the whole day or at least half the day before in bed. I eat steak for breakfast. Basically, I'm clearing my mind, getting my reflexes and attention as high as I can get them," because, as Meryman explains, "the important thing in an interview is not the first answer to a question on a particular topic. That answer should give you the clue to a second question on the subject, and that will lead to a third—and so on until you get to the nub. That's why I train, so that as the person is talking I am supersensitive to those half-articulated hints which clue me into follow-up questions."

*Editor's Note, *Life Magazine*, July 7, 1972. © Time, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

Perhaps not all media can afford to keep you in bed for a working day. But don't lose sight of the point: Interview planning must include preparation, even physical conditioning. Here are two typical areas of research for a major interview.

Documents

Consult the news library for previously published articles on Elizabeth Morgan or her business firm or the topic of management, particularly women in management. Go to your local library and consult an index of library holdings on the related subjects and at least skim the books you find. Books such as Harragan's *Games Mother Never Taught You* (1977) and Dowling's *The Cinderella Complex* (1981) can help you form your own list of typical managerial mistakes and problems common to women managers. They will thus help you talk knowledgeably about the topic. Consult national newspaper indexes particularly those produced by *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, and other major newspapers. In *The Wall Street Journal*, for example, you'll find a useful special report, "The Corporate Woman" (March 24, 1986), filled with accounts of the problems and concerns of women in management, particularly the "glass ceiling": the invisible barrier that seems to prevent women from reaching the top in corporate management.

A subsequent book, *Breaking the Glass Ceiling* (Morrison, White, and Van Velson, 1987), elaborates on that theme. Consult magazine indexes such as the *Magazine Index*, *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, or *Business Periodicals Index*.

Most libraries contain other research indexes that you can use, depending on your needs. If Elizabeth Morgan is prominent, you may find accounts of her in *Current Biography* or *Biography Index*. The community relations department probably has information on both her and XYZ Corporation. General reading in business magazines such as *Savvy* (a magazine for women in managerial positions) is essential.

Basically, you're looking for information that will help you plan the interview, develop your questions, and better inform yourself about the issues of management of a large business firm. Reference books cited here are by no means a complete list. Serious interviewers should have a copy of a book about library research methods, such as Kessler and McDonald's *Uncovering the News* (1987).

Meanwhile, you can produce your own documents. Let's say you are delivering a speech to a group of women in management—not an uncommon experience for an editor of a magazine on management. Passing out slips of blank paper on which you ask each member of the audience to list her "worst managerial mistake" can yield surprisingly effective responses. An audience of fifty may submit twenty or thirty different mistakes and also suggest some

of the more common ones. If fifteen of them list a particular problem, you'll have achieved a useful insight to bring to the interview.

Talking to Others

Preliminary interviews with those acquainted with your person can be useful in countless ways. You can start with informal conversations around the office with any reporters who have interviewed Morgan in the past. You may gain good advice on how to approach her and what subjects she might prefer to talk about or to avoid. Business competitors, even enemies, can provide worthwhile insights and information. Colleagues and family members can often provide personal asides. Obviously, you must exercise caution in approaching friends, family, and colleagues whose loyalty is to her, not you. Talk to them only after she has agreed to the interview. They will check with her before they agree to talk with you. If she has come to trust you, so will they.

ASSESSING CHARACTER AND INTERESTS

Some interviewers appear blessed by luck—they seem to have a knack for getting people to open up to them. Most of them make their own luck. People once marveled how Theodore Roosevelt became such a brilliant conversationalist, equally at home with cowboys and diplomats. Simple. Roosevelt sat up late the night before reading up on subjects he knew would interest his visitor (Carnegie, 1936).

A famous interviewer of World War I compared interviewing to "salesmanship." Isaac F. Marcossou, who interviewed such figures as Theodore Roosevelt and General John J. Pershing, said he always made it a point to learn all he could about a person before the interview. "This is precisely what any good salesman would do."

All celebrated people have an interest, such as yachting, art, great books—"and with that interest you can disarm prejudice and even sterilize opposition to your purpose," he wrote. Interviews must be pitched on a "separate and distinct plane. Some silent men must be swept irresistibly into conversation on the high tide of talk. You take the initiative. Then too there is the type who begins to speak the moment you see him. All you have to do is to guide the current of words" (Marcossou, 1919).

So knowing that Morgan sails yachts and adores the work of impressionist artists can assist your preparation. If Theodore Roosevelt could spend the time reading up on subjects prior to the arrival of an important visitor, surely journalists can do likewise. So you spend an evening on art and yachting.

PREPARING AREAS OF INQUIRY

Precisely what is it that you want to ask? In this case you have but one question, "What are those ten worst mistakes women managers make?" You have a focus so precise that both interviewer and source can follow it easily. But you'll prepare questions, or at least topics of inquiry, to help identify those problem areas.

1. Naivete. Is it true that women often don't understand the rules of men's corporate gamesmanship? If so, what can be done?
2. Absence of career goals or plans; do women plan less for the future than men?
3. Insufficient assertiveness?
4. Tough negotiating ability—women at a disadvantage? Or *advantage* perhaps? (Better listening ability? Less threatening?)
5. Drinking; are office expectations different for women?
6. Power—how do women get it and use it?
7. Gentle persuasion, do women use it more than men?
8. Problems of taking criticism too seriously? . . . and so on.

ANTICIPATING ANSWERS

Suppose you ask Morgan a question on the subject of drinking among women managers: "On the subject of drinking, Betty Harragan discusses the difference in expectations between male and female executives. She says men can get smashed at the office party and people hardly notice, whereas if a woman does the same thing it's a corporate scandal forever more. I'd be interested in knowing whether you have noticed these kinds of expectations."

How will Morgan answer your question about drinking? She has about five options.

1. Agree (more or less) that expectations are different
2. Disagree (more or less)
3. Provide some other perception about drinking
4. Decline comment or dismiss drinking as unimportant
5. Bridge to another topic

For each option, you can think through your next step. If she agrees or provides another perception, then you'll probe for reasons and anecdotal examples that illustrate the problem. She may even volunteer her personal problems with alcohol as an example, particularly if she has confidence in your ability to handle discreetly such delicate information. You'll probe for the lessons she learned from the experience and the advice she has for others.

If she disagrees, you'll probe a little. What specifically does she disagree with? Is she suggesting that business executives don't drink? That she herself has not seen the problem? (Will you confront her at this point with evidence of her own drinking? Probably not, unless you expect this to be the last subject covered in the interview.) That the problem exists but is not worthy of the ten worst mistakes?

If she dismisses it as unimportant, then you can agree to drop it or you can discuss its importance after you've settled on your list of ten worst problems.

If she bridges to another subject, you can bridge her right back to drinking so that she responds in one of the other categories. Stay alert for bridges and ignore them only if the original question seems too unimportant to pursue.

It's always useful to put yourself in the other person's place and think how, were the circumstances reversed, *you* might answer some of your questions. How, for example, would you answer a question about drinking, particularly if you had had a bout with alcoholism in your past? The only way you'd talk about your own personal drinking problem, you may decide, is if you're convinced that it would be truly helpful to others. Anyone proposing to ask about drinking had better make a serious sales pitch about why it's necessary and how the matter would be handled. Thus your planning includes preparation for a persuasive argument on the subject.

THE GAME PLAN

Eventually, the elements of the interview will settle themselves into some kind of organizational pattern, a master plan. As you piece it all together, certain questions will emerge.

Will you insist that she "confess" her own mistakes or will you ask her to speak more generally about problems, some of which she has personally experienced, some of which she hasn't?

Will you seek personal anecdotes? If so, you'll ask questions calculated to elicit anecdotes, such as coming in with several anecdotes of your own to prime the pump.

Will you rely entirely on *her* list of ten mistakes or will you negotiate? If she gives you a list of mistakes, and it seems to miss certain points you consider important, what then?

Will your article contain an introduction giving Morgan's background and qualifications for commenting? If so, you'll ask for any background information that you cannot obtain from published sources.

Eventually it all comes together into some kind of master game plan, perhaps something like this one, which follows the "thematic" organization of interviewing as described early in this chapter.

1. Start with icebreaking conversation about artists Van Gogh and Gauguin and yachting in the Caribbean.
2. When the time seems right, move into the theme of the interview, starting with a full explanation of purpose and what you hope to achieve.
3. Discuss the issue conceptually at first: Why do women executives need this advice? What does she perceive to be the differences, if any, in the management styles of men and women?
4. If appropriate, open with some of your own suggestions about managerial mistakes. Or hear hers first if she seems eager to present them.
5. Discuss anecdotal experiences in relation to each major problem; come prepared with stories gained from reading and previous interviews.
6. Stress the need for the lesson to be learned from each experience. Come prepared with possible examples of lessons others have learned as a means of stimulating discussion.
7. Ask any final questions you haven't already covered, such as biographical information if unavailable elsewhere. (This could come anywhere in the interview, depending on circumstances. If the person is not well known—little biographical information is available elsewhere—it will probably come early in the interview because of your need to know the person's background as context for the questions to follow. In Morgan's case, most biographical details will be known through preinterview research, though a few missing details may need to be explored.)
8. Once you have settled on the final "ten worst," seek some overall conceptual statement, perhaps a quotable comment that sums it all up. Although you discussed this earlier, you probably will find it useful here, too, at the end when both parties know precisely what those ten mistakes are. Summarizing kinds of comments often come naturally at this stage as the interview is winding down.

KEEP YOUR PLANS FLEXIBLE

Sometimes interviewers can benefit from the advice that philosopher-educator William James gave to teachers: Know your subject thoroughly and then trust to luck. Knowing your subject thoroughly permits you to follow down new conversational pathways you could not have envisioned in the planning stage. A certain spontaneity—the off-the-wall answer, the unexpected response—contributes to a more robust and insightful interview that can enhance your article.

But it means frequent departures from your game plan. Suppose you have ten basic questions, and the answer to question 1 happens to include a partial answer to question 4. Do you insist on returning to question 1 or do you follow through with 4? There's no good answer other than to suggest that the more the interview follows the pattern of normal human conversation—with all its stops and turns and erratic patterns—the better. If your source is enthusiastically discussing question 4, why not let her continue rather than dampen the enthusiasm? You can return to question 1 later. Your organiza-

tional pattern will make it easier to keep track of where the interview is going and what missing pieces must be covered eventually.

In such wayward conversations, however, you must serve as guide. Use of transitional phrases helps keep the organizational pattern on track. "I think we've covered the problems of alcoholism sufficiently, so unless you have a final thought why don't we move along to the subject of power and how managers use it."

You then stay with power until you have what you want—unless the conversation takes another erratic spin into another subject, from point 1 to point 7, for example. If you decide to pursue point 7 and get back to point 1 later, some kind of transitional remark will help. "Your comment on assertiveness among women is a point I had on my list of questions. Let's talk more about it now, but I do want to get back to power later on."

Transitions flow more smoothly if you utilize the respondent's words. "Something you said earlier—about your having to learn to be less thin-skinned in response to criticism—reminds me that I want to talk about that." If you are about to ask something personal, such as whether *she* ever became emotional over criticism, using her words to introduce the subject makes it seem less harsh. It's as though she herself had brought it up. In a sense, she did. Such a transition also shows that you're listening. Nothing encourages conversation and personal candor more than good listening.

CHAPTER NINE

Learning to Listen

Q. Tell me about listening.

A. Ah, listening. Listening is the one area of human activity where it makes sense to be a little selfish. Imagine! The more you take from a speaker through listening, the more that speaker will give.

Q. Huh?

Journalistic interviewers are not equal. Some get more than others. They do it not by clever questions. Quite the opposite. They get more information by asking fewer questions and listening more intensely. Two kinds of listening are involved.

The first kind of listening occurs when you know precisely what kinds of details you want out of an interview. If you want quotable quotes or anecdotes, you must listen for them and recognize them when they occur. Sources don't say, "Here's an anecdote for your lead"; they just talk. It's up to you to distinguish the quotable kernels from the chaff.

People don't often encounter the second kind of listening. Here you listen with the entire self, the eyes and the body as well as the ears. You listen from the other person's point of view, listen not to judge but to understand,