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Top Ten Preparations for a Television Appearance

By Tara Kachaturoff, Executive Coach

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It's a dream come true. You've been invited to appear on a local or national television program to talk about your business, your new book, or perhaps an invention. Now what should you do? While a television appearance can seem overwhelming at first, following this advice will make it an interesting, fun, and enjoyable experience.

1. Details, details, and more details.

The more you know before the television program taping, the easier it will be to prepare for the experience. First, you need to know who will be hosting the show. Research the host by looking up their name on the internet or searching newspaper archives for more information. The station or studio probably maintains their own website with biographies of its key employees as well. Make sure you have the host's complete contact information and that of their assistant in case something comes up. Second, you need to know what topic will be discussed. Does the host want you to talk about a topic they intend to choose? Do they want you to respond to a current event, trend or idea that applies to your area of expertise? Or, do they want you to provide a list of potential topics from which they can select one that would be of interest to their audience? Once you know this information, it will be easier for you to orient your responses to meet expectations. Third, you need to gain some familiarity with the program and its format. Watch a couple of the shows if you can or borrow a tape of a prior show to see how guests are greeted and interviewed. Try to imagine yourself in the same circumstances. Notice how everyone is seated, how greetings are exchanged, how long the show is between commercial breaks, and what people are wearing.

2. Familiarity breeds comfort.

Provide the host with your press or marketing kit once you are invited to be on the show. The host or producer wants to get to know you just as much as you want to get to know them. Provide a one page professional overview which describes your business, your background and experience, professional awards, certifications and designations, any titles of publications, as well as complete contact information.

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3. Fieldtrips are fun.

Visit the studio where the program taping will take place a week or so before your scheduled appearance. Make sure that you have clear driving directions, including contact names, telephone numbers, and fax numbers. This field trip will serve to reduce any nervousness or anxiety about the taping. If you have permission, walk around the studio to familiarize yourself with the location, the employees, and the types of equipment that will be around you as the show is taped (cameras, lights, etc.). Better yet, attend a live taping if you can and watch what goes on. You'll find out that it's not as big a deal as you originally thought.

4. Meet the host.

Meet the individual or individuals who will be hosting the show. While in person is best, if you can't manage that, have a telephone conversation so that you hear their voice and gain some experience with their speaking and communication style. This interaction will help increase your comfort level before the actual taping takes place.

5. I've got a question.

Once you are clear about the objective of the television program, write out some possible interview questions, along with responses. This exercise will help you to organize your thoughts and to make notes about the information you want to provide during the limited time that you have. This is a good time to gather interesting quotations, statistics, supporting case studies or stories, and potential resources, all which will serve to enrich your content. This upfront preparation will add to your professionalism and credibility in that your ideas will be well organized, supported, and delivered with much more ease than if you spoke "off the cuff". Your host may even ask for questions to be submitted in advance, not that he or she will necessarily use these, but more for helping them gain familiarity with you, your background, and your topic.

6. This is life, but this is a rehearsal.

Practice and practice some more. Ask a friend or associate to make up interview questions (or use ones you've written in advance) so that you can practice responding. Wear clothes that you think you might wear to the actual taping and practice using hand and facial gestures as well. If you can, videotape yourself so that you can have an idea as to how you might appear to others. It will also allow you to check on any nervous habits or distracting gestures.

7. Logistics.

Once you know the date and time of the taping, plan on arriving forty–five minutes to one hour in advance. This will allow you to calm any nervousness and to review any last minute notes - even if you are just sitting in your car. If possible, don't plan any activities before the taping. Keep your mind calm and quiet. Don't answer the cell phone or call the office checking for messages. Concentrate on the task at hand. Also, if you need to eat before the taping, either eat at home wearing something other than the clothes you will wear on television, be very careful, or have an extra change of clothes on

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hand just in case you need to do a quick wardrobe change. Also, make sure you teeth are brushed and free of food particles.

8. Present your best you.

When it's "go time" make sure that you are wearing clothing appropriate for the audience and congruent with the nature of the program. Don't wear bright white, red or other bright colors, or any clothing with a "heavy" design which will detract from your face. Navy suits or pants and cream-colored blouses or shirts are appropriate. Don't wear jewelry that clangs or makes distracting noises. Have your nails manicured, even though no one will see them. It will make you feel more confident. Cut your hair at least a week in advance so that you can practice styling it the way that you want. This is not the time to experiment with new hair styles or hair colors. For women, if you're not comfortable doing your own makeup, you can have it professionally done at any upscale department store cosmetic counter. If you are at a large studio, there may be someone available to help you with both your hair and makeup. Also, a week or so before, purchase a teeth whitening kit (whitening strips are very effective), and start using them. There's nothing better than a great smile showing nice, white teeth.

9. I've been duped!

If allowed, make sure you ask the studio to make you a copy of the program, either on digital or tape media. You can always have the tape duplicated and use it to give away as part of your press or media package. You must obtain a written release from the studio or station to have a copy of the program and to have it duplicated. Also, because you don't have rights to the taped product, you will not be able to sell it or make a profit from it. Companies that specialize in legitimate tape duplication will require a written release, from the studio, before making any copies for you.

10. There's a pressing matter at hand.

When you appear on television, you immediately become viewed as an expert. Take advantage of this opportunity by going to www.prweb.com to send out a free press release announcing your upcoming television appearance. This information might be picked up by local and national media, leading to potential radio, television, and print opportunities.

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How to Turn Tough Times Into Fun Times, A Daycare Guide: Planning for Holidays &

By Clairece Feagin

Teachers and caregivers often spend vast amounts of time preparing for special occasions, particularly for holiday celebrations. In fact, preparation for some holidays consumes so much teacher time that the children and their program are neglected, perhaps for as long as two or three weeks. This is not an acceptable practice.

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Young children do not need — or expect — elaborate celebrations. Two- and even three-year-olds will have very little if any understanding of the meaning of most holidays or other special occasions. They have little if any knowledge of the customary or traditional activities associated with these occasions. Older preschoolers may remember some features of school or family observances from previous years, but their enjoyment of a celebration is not based on elaborate adult preparations.

The aspects of special occasions that children find meaningful are those activities that they themselves can participate in directly and fully. Children do need—and have every right to expect—fun, self-paced, child-centered activities every day, including special occasions and celebrations.

To make special occasions enjoyable for children,

1. keep celebrations simple and short;
2. plan child-centered, child-paced activities;
3. keep preparations simple;
4. begin preparations no earlier than one or two days before the event or holiday;
5. involve children in every aspect of preparations;
6. keep the agenda flexible.

New or unusual situations, unknown people, a larger number of people than a child is accustomed to, or new requirements even in a familiar place are all stressful for young children. The most successful events are those that include many familiar features.

Clairece Feagin holds an Ed.M. from Harvard University. She is author of Contemporary Books' "Stories for Parents" and "Let's Read Together" series as well as various social studies texts and teaching materials. To order the complete course listed above and other self-instruction courses for childcare providers and parents, please visit CARE Courses, at <http://www.carecourses.com>

How to Turn Tough Times Into Fun Times, A Daycare Guide: Planning for Holidays & Guide to Gambling Online

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