

15 Tried and Tested Techniques for Directing Engaging Interviews with Directors



One of the most critical aspects of producing a filmmaking or documentary project is conducting interviews with the directors. These interviews provide insights into the creative process, vision, and challenges faced by the directors while bringing their stories to life on the silver screen. However, directing interviews with directors requires a unique set of skills and techniques to ensure the conversation is engaging, illuminating, and captivating for the viewers.

1. Preparation is Key

Before conducting the interview, it is essential to do thorough research about the director and their body of work. Study their films, understand their style, and familiarize yourself with their achievements and obstacles. This preparation will

help you create questions that dig deeper into their motivations, inspirations, and decision-making processes.



On Directing: Interviews with Directors

by Gabriella Giannachi (Kindle Edition)

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2. Develop a Connection

Building a rapport with the director before the interview is crucial. Take the time to have a casual conversation or arrange a pre-interview meeting. By establishing a connection, trust is established, and the director will feel more comfortable sharing their insights, stories, and experiences during the interview.

3. Create a Comfortable Environment

Ensure that the interview space is comfortable and inviting for the director. Provide them with a chair they find comfortable, a glass of water, and adjust the lighting and temperature to their liking. When the director is at ease, their natural personality shines through, resulting in a compelling and authentic conversation.

4. Craft Open-Ended Questions

Instead of asking yes/no questions, prepare open-ended questions that encourage the director to elaborate on their thoughts and experiences. These

questions allow the interview to flow naturally and give the director the opportunity to provide detailed and insightful responses.

5. Active Listening

Effective directing involves active listening. Pay attention to the director's answers, body language, and non-verbal cues during the interview. This not only helps you understand their perspective but also enables you to ask follow-up questions that delve deeper into specific areas of interest.

6. Use Visual Aids

Incorporate visual aids such as clips from the director's films or behind-the-scenes footage during the interview. This not only adds visual interest to the conversation but also allows the director to reference specific scenes or shots to illustrate their points, making the interview more engaging for the audience.

7. Time Management

Efficiently manage the interview's timing to cover all the essential topics while also allowing the director enough time to express their thoughts. Be mindful of the duration and ensure the conversation flows seamlessly, so neither party feels rushed or cut off prematurely.

8. Embrace Silence

Silence can be powerful. Allow moments of silence after a particularly poignant response from the director. This not only gives the director time to reflect but also allows the audience to absorb the depth of their words. Embracing silence brings an emotional depth that can truly captivate the viewers.

9. Adapt to Different Personalities

Directors come from diverse backgrounds and have unique personalities. As an interviewer, it is crucial to adapt your approach to each individual director. Some may prefer light-hearted banter, while others may prefer a more serious and introspective tone. Being flexible and tailoring your interview style accordingly will ensure a more genuine and engaging conversation.

10. Manage Nervousness

Directors, even those with extensive experience, may feel nervous during interviews. It's your role as the director of the interview to help them relax and overcome any anxiety. Offering words of encouragement and assuring them of their expertise can go a long way in creating a friendly and positive atmosphere.

11. Research the Audience

Understanding the target audience of the interview is crucial in directing it effectively. Consider their interests, knowledge level, and what they hope to gain from watching the interview. Tailoring your questions to cater to their specific needs will ensure the interview resonates with viewers and keeps them engaged throughout.

12. Maintain Objectivity

As an interviewer, it is important to maintain objectivity and avoid expressing personal opinions that may influence the director's responses. The goal is to capture their authentic voice and provide a platform for their thoughts and ideas to be heard.

13. Balance Structure and Spontaneity

Creating a loose structure for the interview allows for a smooth flow and ensures essential topics are covered. However, it is equally important to embrace

spontaneity and allow the conversation to take unexpected turns. This flexibility adds an element of surprise and keeps the interview dynamic and engaging.

14. Probe for Specifics

When the director makes broad statements or references, don't hesitate to ask for specific examples or instances. This helps ground their responses and provides concrete evidence for the audience to connect with. It also gives the director an opportunity to delve deeper into their creative decisions and share valuable insights.

15. Recap and Wrap Up

Towards the end of the interview, summarize the key points discussed to reinforce the director's main messages. This recap allows the audience to solidify their understanding and serves as a natural transition towards wrapping up the conversation. Ending the interview on a positive note, expressing gratitude, and offering the director a platform to promote their upcoming projects adds a sense of closure and leaves a lasting impression.

Directing interviews with directors is an art in itself. By following these 15 tried and tested techniques, you can ensure that your interview captures the essence of the director's vision, creativity, and experiences. Remember, the key is to be well-prepared, adaptable, and passionate about storytelling. With the right approach, your interviews can become compelling pieces of content that educate, inspire, and entertain viewers for years to come.

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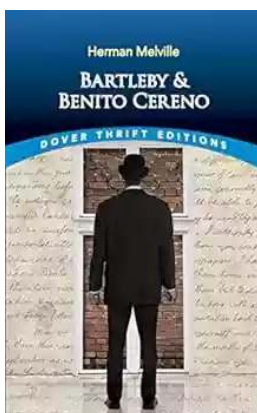
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The profession of directing is barely a century old. On Directing considers the position of the director in theater and performance today. What is a director? How do they begin work on a play or performance? What methods are used in rehearsal? Is the director an enabler, a collaborator or dictator? As we enter the new millennium, is the very concept of directing under increasing threat from changes in thinking and practice? The full diversity of today's approaches to directing are explored through a series of interviews with leading contemporary practitioners. On Directing is a landmark book about the director's craft.



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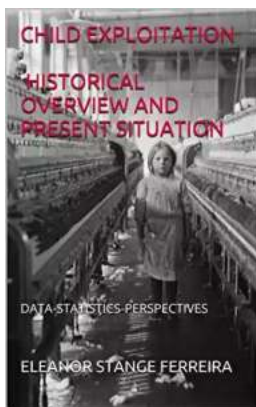
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