



OHIO CREDIT
UNION LEAGUE

For the Pros: Interview Techniques

Once you feel you have mastered the basic news interview tips provided, take a shot at the techniques that are taught to frequent interviewees. These take some practice before mastering, so it might be worth testing them with a colleague in a mock interview setting.

Below are techniques that will allow you to master responses in almost any interview opportunity.

Umbrella

- An umbrella is a pre-rehearsed response to a question that you know you are going to receive.
- Keep your umbrella response to 8 – 12 seconds.
- It is typical to rush this response since you are anticipating it, but take your time.
- Ex. Question: “What is a credit union?” Response: “A member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative created with the members’ best interest in mind.”

Bridging

- A bridge is a statement to help you move from one topic to another and allows you to communicate your key message.
- One of the most commonly used techniques.
- Common bridges include, “but, I can tell you this.” or “It is important to note.”
- Ex. Question: “This is the 3rd time your credit union has been robbed this year, correct.” Response: “We have had more robberies lately, but it is important to note that our credit union is safer than ever and we have recently installed new security measures to help identify suspects and keep members safe.”

Bump and Run

- A short answer that allows you to move on to a new topic, yet does not provide an effective sound bite.
- The bump and run is effective if you are repeatedly asked a question you already answered.
- This tactic steers the reporter away from a topic and, hopefully, onto something you do want to answer. Effective bump and runs include “yes,” “no,” “not enough information,” and “I cannot answer that.”
- Ex. Question: “I am hearing that more than \$20,000 was stolen this afternoon. Is this true.” Answer: “No.” Question: “How much was stolen then?” Answer: “We do not have that information.”

Turning the Tables

- An interesting tactic that allows the interviewee to ask the question and answer it.
- Opportunities to use this technique are rare; but, when applicable, it is effective because you can apply key messages and get your point across.
- Ex. Question: “Is how you handled the situation typical of the industry as a whole.” Answer: “People will probably ask me at some point if we did everything right, and I feel confident we did.”

Hooking

- In a hook, you answer the question asked, but then phrase your answer so that the next natural question is one you are prepared for.
- Use a hook to lead into one of your key messages.
- Ex. Question: “How many credit union members are there in Ohio? Answer: “There are more than 2.6 million credit union members, and we are always looking for more people who want to learn about the differences between banks and credit unions. Question: “What are the differences?”

Flagging

- Flags are statements that underline the importance of what you are trying to state so it is better received by the reader/listener/viewer, depending on the medium.
- Common flags are: “The most important thing to remember,” “If you take away one tip,” and “The key issue is.”
- Ex. Question: “This seems like a laundry list of tips on how to budget, what is most important.” Answer: “The most important thing is to separate your wants from needs, that should get you started.”