



The St. George's Foundation

Historically Speaking *General Interviewing Tips*

- *Be sure you are familiar with your equipment.*
- *Layout all consent forms, writing utensils, equipment & questionnaires prior to the interview.*
- *The interviewer should be dressed appropriately.*
- *The interviewee should be comfortable.*
- *The interviewee & interviewer should be the only ones in the room.*
- *Begin only after the consent form is signed.*
- *Listen for background noise & do what you can to minimize or avoid it.*
 1. *Turn off televisions, radios, cell phones & pagers*
 2. *If others are home encourage them to avoid the interview room*
 3. *Avoid rooms with chiming clocks, noise appliances, or noisy heating & cooling systems*

- Be sure the names of the interviewee, interviewer, location and full date are recorded at the beginning of the interview.
- Avoid words or sounds of acknowledgement. Eye contact and silent nodding are just as effective yet avoid interrupting the interview.
- Listen
- Use open-ended questions.
- If necessary, guide interviewee back to topic but **DO NOT** interrupt. Allow interviewee to complete thought.
- If there is any resistance to a line of questioning, abandon it completely.
- Ask one question at a time.
- Always speak clearly and ask the respondent to do the same.
- Ask for follow up details on people & places when appropriate.
- Listen
- Ask for dates of events.
- Ask all questions on sheet but be able to ask additional relevant questions not listed.
- Be alert to your narrator tiring or needing a break.
- Thank your interviewee on tape.