

# STEPS TO MAKE AN INTERVIEW WORK

**You can't write a good story without talking to people. Find sources, listen to them, allow them to tell their stories and ask follow-up questions until you have your story. Follow these tips.**

## **Prepare**

- ▶ Journalists must know what they need to ask before they begin an interview. Talk to other students, coaches and teachers. Do what it takes to be as prepared as possible, and write those questions down.

## **Ask open-ended questions**

- ▶ These begin with "How," "What," "Where," "When" and "Why." They start conversations which lead to the information you want. Don't ask two questions at once. Make them answer the tough questions.

## **Be quiet**

- ▶ If you stop talking, they'll start. Smile and nod. Don't interrupt. Let silence linger longer than a normal conversation. They will keep talking.

## **Care**

- ▶ If you show your subject you think their story is important, they are more likely to open up to you.

## **Keep them in the know**

- ▶ Tell your interviewee what you're writing about (in general). They might help you stay on topic.

## **Edit**

- ▶ Revision is not just for the finished product. Quotes matter. They should only be as long as they are relevant. Keep only necessary words in the quotes.