

# Doing a 'DTL': top tips

WITH THE national lock-down, the media are increasingly relying on 'down-the-line' interviews via your lap-top. But although you are sitting comfortably in your own home, you still need to come across as **AUTHENTIC, GENUINE** and **TRUSTWORTHY**. It's hard to do that if you are presenting the viewer with numerous distractions, whether the colour of your curtains or that interesting picture on the wall.

The old saying goes that winning people to your side during a crisis is 5 per cent what you say, and 95 per cent of how you appear. So follow these tips to make sure you don't fall into the trap of giving the viewer a reason not to focus on the **KEY MESSAGE** you are delivering:



## NO nostril shots please

We've all seen them – people sitting at their desks staring down at their lap-top. Remember – it is no longer a lap-top, it is now a camera. **RAISE** your lap top with a pile of books so you are looking straight ahead at the camera. Also, restrict movement: the busier the picture, the more bandwidth used and it can buffer.

## Background

Find as **PLAIN** a background as you can, so people are not looking at what books you have on your shelf, or that your plant needs watering. Avoid a plain white background though which might glare. And don't put family pictures or expensive items in shot - there are bad people about.



## Appearance

Look **SMART** – would you turn up at a TV studio in your old fleece and slippers? You may be at home but get into 'environmental pose' to look authoritative and trustworthy: if you are in a uniformed organisation, wear your uniform but without hat. Otherwise a jacket and shirt for men, or jacket and high neck top for women. Also, the hairdressers may be all closed, but you still need to look presentable; if your hair is beginning to get out of control, get some hair moose if you can.

## Colours

The camera loves dark colours and low contrasts. **NAVY AND LIGHT BLUES** work best. Avoid checks, pinstripes and herringbone.



## Accessories

Basically, don't wear any. Its not just a distraction for the viewer – you can **CLANK** jewellery against the desk, or **JANGLE** every time you move.

## Lighting

Make sure you are not **SILHOUETTED** against a window or light, otherwise you will look sinister. Turn the camera onto yourself to check what you look like. Arrange some lighting to lift your features if necessary.



## Sound

Ensure **NOISE DISCIPLINE** amongst the rest of the people in your house for the duration of the interview. There is nothing worse than a flushing loo or vacuum starting up just as you make your key point. And lock the door - barricade yourself in otherwise you can guarantee your children, dog or cat will come wandering in half way through the interview.

**All set? Now for the interview...**

# TOP INTERVIEW TIPS

1



Don't be bullied into giving an interview if you are not ready – arrange a **time** with the journalist to call back or to give an interview, so allowing yourself time to prepare properly. Also, by phoning them back, you can check they are a bona fide journalist.

2

Always **check** whether the interview is live or recorded. If recorded, the journalist won't mind if you ask to stop to re-do a segment; the journalist wants a compact sound bite as much as you.



3



Keep it **core and compact** – no matter how complex an issue, you will not have the chance to make more than *three key points*.

4

Therefore, before the interview work out what are the **three key points** you want to make.



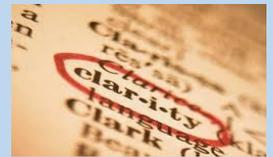
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**Proof points** – always back up your statements with a brief piece of evidence.

6

Use **plain language** that the public can understand – short hand terms common in your particular sector may not be understood by the general public. Also, it can actually mean different things to different groups.



7



Use **vocal imagery** – don't reel off figures and percentages, put it into a physical context that your audience can visualise e.g 'an area the size of Wales', 'two football pitches' etc

8

Don't fill air time – an old journalist trick is to stay quiet after you have answered a question, so you feel the need to keep talking, and thus more likely to make a mistake. If you have answered the question, **stop talking**



9

When the interview is over, make sure the microphone is **turned off** before you say anything further– remember all those politicians who didn't!



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