Tips for a successful interview project

1) Reorder the questions into a logical sequence, and make sure the questions you have written are detailed and probe deeper into knowing your person’s culture.

2) Decide if the tú or Ud. form is more appropriate for your interview – Go into the digital copy of the interview questions, make sure all the questions follow the same tense/subject – delete the conjugations/subjects that you won’t be using.

3) Eliminate any of the questions that won’t pertain to your person

4) Email the copy of the edited questions to your person a couple of days ahead of time. This will allow them to consider their answers and give you concise responses.

5) Do a practice run with your person (go ahead and record it) and focus on just listening to what they have to say without stress. Take the time to clarify things you didn’t understand or ask follow-up questions – if you don’t know how to form the questions properly, ask your interviewee, write it down, and then ask the follow-up question(s) in your “real” interview.

6) Try and offer up some of your own commentary and/or appropriate interjections to respond to what your person says – don’t just read rapid-fire questions at them! Make it conversation-like. It should not be a one-sided conversation. Try to use appropriate interjections that indicate your understanding

EX) ¡Ay, que pena! / Wow, no lo sabía / ¡Qué interesante! / ¿Qué significa….(when you don’t know a word they said) / ¡Qué bien! / Yo entiendo. / ¡Claro que sí! / ¿En serio?

7) Don’t wait until the last minute to find someone! Schedule a time early-on to get this done! Expect to spend between 45 mins. to 1.5 hours with your person.

8) When asking a series of questions, don’t just rapid-fire all 3-4 questions at them at once. Let the person answer 1-2 at a time, then follow up with more detailed questions.

9) Ask your person to speak clearly and slowly. If they’re going too fast, just say, “más despacio, por favor.”

10) To use the school’s digital recorders, hit the RECORD button (the one with a red dot) to both start a recording and pause the player. If you have paused the recorder you can continue recording within the same audio by hitting RECORD again to resume it. Hitting STOP (the button with a square) will completely stop the recording and will restart on a new file if you hit record again.

11) Choose a quiet, comfortable place that is as free from interruptions as possible.