



Help File

Questions to Ask Candidates for Host



Morgan Holm of OPB asked me to suggest some questions for interviews he planned to conduct of candidates for host of the new OPB daily talk show “Think Out Loud.” Here are the questions I suggested.

Some or all of these questions may strike you as odd. My goal is to get inside the head of the host candidate, to see if they think deeply and broadly, and if they understand their role and their strengths and weaknesses.

Questions:

1. **Why are you in broadcasting – what “message” do you want to deliver?** *(It is a trick question. Most will think the right answer is “I have no message – I am objective and neutral.” Actually, that is foolish. If they don’t have something to say, a point of view they think is unique, why did they get into the business in the first place?)*
2. **What is wrong with news/talk broadcasting today?** *(Have they thought about this?)*

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3. **What are the top 3 issues that face our region of the country? Who are the best thinkers on these issues? What special approach to these would you take to present them effectively?**
4. **Why are you unique?**
5. **What are your media consumption habits? What do you read, watch, and listen to?**
6. **How much public television do you watch? What's the latest program you've seen and what did you think of it?**
7. **How much public radio do you listen to? What don't you like and why?**
8. **Tell me a story.**
9. **What is the riskiest thing you've ever done and how did it turn out? Why did you take the risk? What are you afraid of?**
10. **Where do you get your ideas from?**
11. **Tell me about the rest of your current life? How do you spend your time away from work?**
12. **How much of your life do you think this job will consume?**
(Another trick question. The correct answer is "more than I can imagine.")
13. **What is the role of the host beyond actually anchoring the broadcast?** *(Does the host understand his/her role not as coach or manager, but as a team "captain" helping lead team morale, etc.?)*
14. **What knowledge and special interests do you have?**
15. **What are you not good at, and how do you deal with these weaknesses?**
16. **What makes you angry? How do you respond to stress?**
17. **What are you passionate about?**