

## **HOW TO GIVE GREAT INTERVIEWS TO THE MUSIC PRESS**

Interviews are an art form. Spit out a few memorable soundbites and you can light a rocket under your career, recruit an army of diehard fans and create a mythology around your band that will sustain you even when you run out of decent tunes. Drop a few foot-in-mouth clangers, on the other hand, and you'll kill your career faster than you can say 'Kula Shaker'. Here's what to do next time someone dangles a dictaphone under your nose.

### **#1. Be ready for the call**

You'd be amazed how often an up-and-coming band blows a priceless chance to appear in a national publication – because they were out buying cat food and clean forgot to answer the phone. Unless being chaotic is part of your carefully cultivated image, confirm when the journalist will be calling and write it down in your diary.

### **#2. Give them your undivided attention**

It's tempting to multi-task while you're talking to a journalist, but try to avoid this: you'll just give distracted answers while you're paying the Aldi cashier and lose mobile reception every two minutes as you walk through town. Find a quiet room where you get the full five bars on your mobile, sit down, stop eating that cheese sandwich and engage with their questions.

### **#3. Elect a spokesperson**

Some bands try to be egalitarian and include all five members in an interview, but it's always a disaster, as everyone jumps in with scattershot comments, the quotes get attributed to the wrong person and the journalist won't get to the heart of your story. If it's a phone interview, limit it to the singer and one other bandmember, depending on who's the least hungover.

### **#4. Prepare a few stories**

You can't anticipate everything a music journalist will ask you, but it's a safe bet they'll fish for war stories about tough early gigs and incidents from the road. Keep a few anecdotes up your sleeve – like that time you mud-wrestled an ostrich or filled Slash's top hat with gravy – and you won't be put on the back foot.

### **#5. Read the publication in advance**

The day before the interview, do a bit of digging. If you'll be speaking to a sensationalist gutter-press rag with a nasty habit of outing celebrities as sexual deviants, keep your guard up and maybe even bring along your own dictaphone to stop your words being twisted. If it's a specialist musical instrument magazine that puts its subjects on a pedestal, on the other hand, you can speak candidly and enjoy yourself without fear of a stitch-up.

## **#6. Give them an angle**

The fist-chewingly dull reality might be that you all met through the Join My Band website – but that’s not going to inspire anyone to walk ten miles in the sheeting rain to watch you play. We’re not saying you should fabricate your backstory, but if there have been any hard knocks, crooked ex-managers, near-death-experiences or moments of us-against-the-world drama, embellish them to the hilt and create a bit of folklore.

## **#7. Don’t be monosyllabic**

There’s nothing more infuriating for a journalist than the musician who manages to answer every question with a mumbled “yes”, “no” or “dunno” while fiddling with their belt buckle. Once you’re a living legend, you can be as witheringly blunt with music hacks as you like – it never did the late Lou Reed any harm – but on your way up, expand on your answers or the media will mark your card as a sleeve-muttering bore and stop bothering to ask you.

## **#8. Be charismatic**

The music is the main event, but if you want to be a band that achieves immortality, fans need to make an emotional investment in your worldview. If you can captivate people with your opinions – by being witty, outrageous, provocative, whimsical, otherworldly or searingly political – they’ll wear your t-shirts, crowd-fund your albums, dress like you and elevate you far beyond the status of a mere rock ‘n’ roll band. Think Lemmy. Think Morrissey. Think Keith Richards. Think Noel Gallagher.

## **#9. Trade your wares**

There’s no need to endlessly plug your forthcoming album like some shopping channel goon, but do make sure it’s at least mentioned during the interview. When it comes to promoting your music, be passionate: try to make it sound exciting, reveal the meaning behind a few key songs and illustrate why people need to hear this record. If you do your job properly, the first thing punters will do after they’ve read your interview is check out your album on Spotify.

**Article Source:** <http://www.roland.co.uk/blog/give-great-interviews/>