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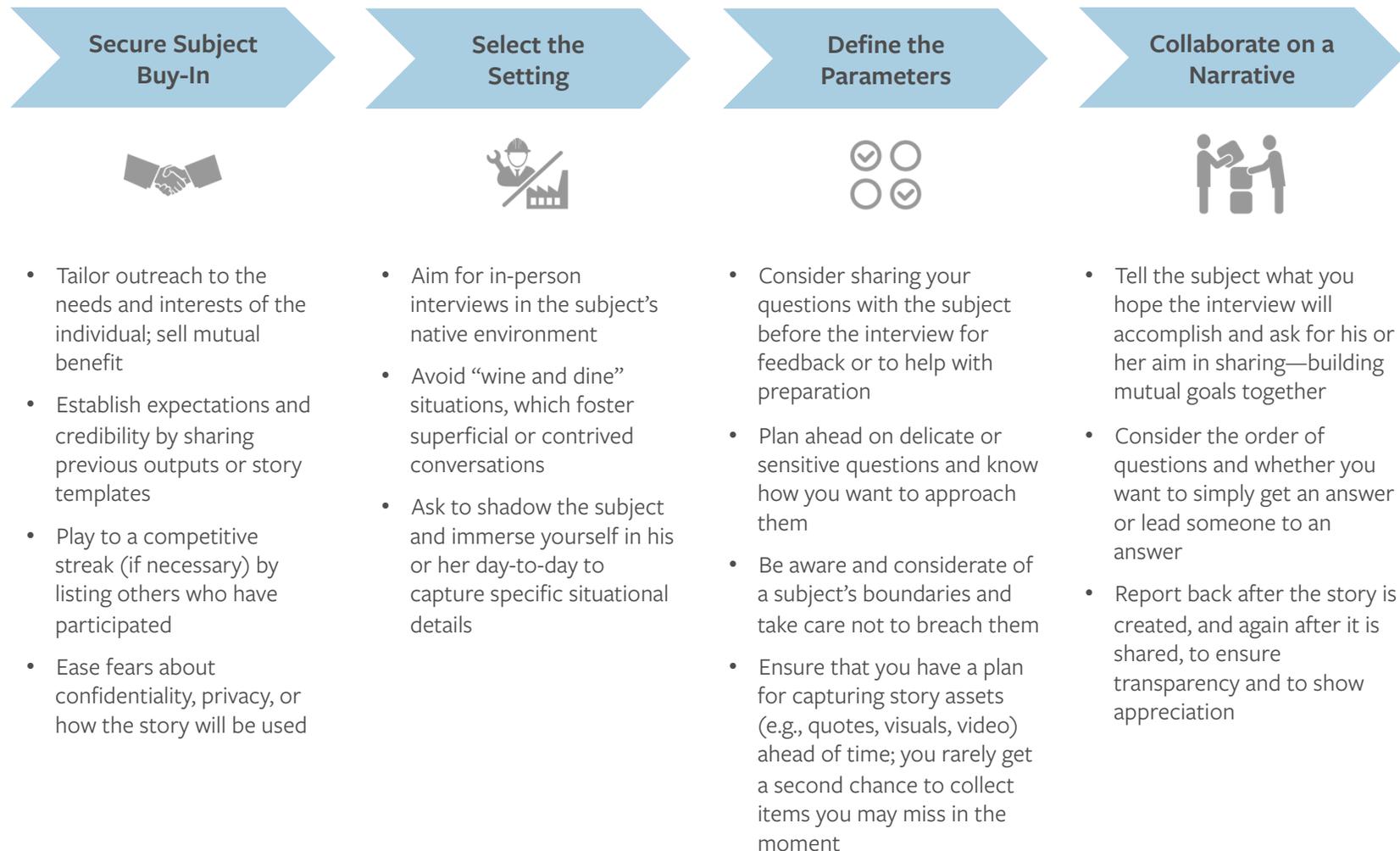
AMU 401: Narrative Storytelling in the Digital Age

Interviewing Techniques

February 13, 2015

Interview Success Hinges on Preparation

Process of Building Trust Begins Before the First Question is Asked



Reconstructing the Character Interview

Analyzing Policy Story Sound Bites Can Reveal Common Question Structures

Quotes that Illustrate Character

...and the Questions that Elicit Them

The Department of Transportation wants truckers to sleep more. Congress said no.

The cromnibus temporarily rolled back some limits on how long drivers can go without a rest.

By Lydia DePillis December 16, 2014

Dick Pingel has a long wait ahead of him.

He's sitting in the cab of his 18-wheeler at a warehouse in Norfolk, Neb., at about 3 in the afternoon, waiting to drop off an order of frozen juice. The warehouse had stopped taking deliveries at about 1 p.m. and doesn't start again until early the next morning. So now, he has to wait at this way station between Omaha and Sioux Falls, where he'll empty the rest of his load and make his way home to Plover, Wis. — a day later than he'd planned.

For an owner-operator on contract with a distributor that pays for each delivery — rather than by the hour — taking longer to do any given job means a smaller paycheck at the end of the month.

"If the wheels aren't turning, you're not earning," says Pingel, 61. And he thinks the government is making the problem worse, with its restrictions on the number of hours he can drive.

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Last week, however, something unusual happened: The federal government actually [made the rules less strict](#), suspending the requirement that the 34-hour rest include two early morning stints, and effectively bumping the 70-hour restriction back up to 82 (even though few drivers actually reach that maximum). Along with other measures tucked into a \$1.014 trillion spending bill, it passed at the last minute with little discussion.

time on the roads, which reduces accidents (the National Fraternal Order of Police agreed, supporting the delay of the rules, while the International Association of Chiefs of Police disagreed, opposing it). That's why it wants another study of the law's "unintended impacts," and the rollback expires at the end of next September, giving the DOT time to do some extra research.

In the meantime, the trucking industry is [expected to become more productive](#), and Pingel has a little more freedom to make some extra cash for the holidays. He grosses about \$220,000 a year, but with maintenance and gas, he's left with about \$35,000. Enough to live modestly, but not enough to recover if anything were to happen to his truck — itself a powerful incentive against reckless driving.

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- ✓ Tell me more about how you're affected by government restrictions on the hours you can drive...
- ✓ How is your life different now than it was before the restrictions?

"It's real nice to think you'll be sleeping the whole time," he says. "All you're doing is being tense, thinking about how you're going to get your hours in."

- ✓ What goes through your mind when you have to take the government-mandated breaks?
- ✓ Describe for me how the effects of the regulations are different than policymakers intended...

"I've got \$200,000 invested in a business that I've had for 35 years that I could lose by one accident," he says.

- ✓ What do you wish policymakers knew about how truck drivers approach their jobs?
- ✓ Explain why you think the recent legislation won't have the effects on drivers that people fear it will...

Collection Mechanism Dictates Tradeoffs

Variety of Options When Collecting Stories, Balancing Quality, Quantity and Usability of Outcomes

