**Conducting a good interview**

**What *not* to do:**

* Do not force your beliefs or opinions on the narrator.
* Do not force responses to sensitive questions.
* Do not ask leading questions or closed questions (see examples in the charts below.).
* Do not draw attention to the recorder.
* Do not make a lot of noise.
* Do not argue with the narrator.
* Do not make the interview very long so you and the narrator get very tired.
* Do not dominate the interview by giving long answers to questions the narrator asks you.

**Choice of questions**

Choose neutral and open questions (and not leading and closed questions)

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| **LEADING QUESTIONS** | **NEUTRAL QUESTIONS** |
| You must have been happy on election night. | How did you feel on election night? |
| You didn’t like Mr. X, did you? | Tell me about Mr. X. |
| What do you think of Mr. Jones’ outrageous behavior? | What did Mr. Jones do then? |

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| **CLOSED QUESTIONS** | **OPEN-ENDED OR EVOCATIVE QUESTIONS** |
| Where were your parents born? | What did your parents tell you about their lives? |
| Did your family have gatherings? | Describe your family gatherings. |
| What holidays did your family celebrate? | How were holidays celebrated in your family? |
| Was religion important to your family? | Tell me about religious observances in your family. |
| Did you and your friends play games as children? | Describe some games you played as a child? |
| When did you finish school? | How did your formal education end? |
| Were you in the service during World War II? | Tell me about your life during World War II. |
| Did you get a job after the war? | Tell me what you did after you got out of the service. |
| Did you like your job? | How did you feel about your job? |