



## Interview prep

### Before the interview:

- Google the latest news relating to veganism as you may receive questions about them. Prepare to answer them.
- Pick out two or three key messages to get across in your interview and jot them down. Make sure the messages are positive, reasonable and powerful.

### At the interview:

- Reel off your key messages at the first opportunity, for example when they can be linked to your answer to the interviewer's question.
- Try to talk about your key message at the very beginning so that all the follow-up questions will be related to your statement.
- Don't make veganism about vegans. It's about the animals. This doesn't mean you shouldn't talk about the practicalities of being vegan, but be careful when you explain the context behind it.
- Try not to sound overly emotional. It's tough when talking about animal rights but make an effort not to overdo it - otherwise people will ignore your message.
- It's okay to repeat messages. People will forget because it's the spoken word and there is nothing wrong with reinforcing your message.
- Avoid jargon. Be conversational but not too chatty. You must make listeners/viewers want to become vegan.
- Don't be defensive - always turn it around and sound positive. People will like you, meaning they're more likely to hear what you say and take it on board.
- Being enthusiastic and telling personal stories works well on the radio. Don't go too far, but telling the presenter what made you go vegan is always great.
- Don't interrupt unless you have to - if someone is talking non-stop, find a pause and say loudly with confidence: "Can I respond to that, please?" and immediately respond.
- Try to say 'well' and 'so' at the beginning of your answers if you struggle with silence. Avoid 'um' and 'err'.
- End well, with a powerful statement or on a positive note.

### After the interview:

- Always drop the producer and/or interviewer a note saying thank you (unless the interview was in person - in which case you can thank them there!). Ask him or her to keep you in mind for any future opportunities relating to veganism. Do this regardless of whether you actually enjoyed the chat or not.
- Listen back (we all hate it but it's important) and note down what you can do to improve next time. Did you talk too fast? Did you sound too angry/negative/overly emotional? Did you have a problem with a particular question? Write yourself a stock answer for it.



## Pre-recorded interviews

Sometimes they will only use a soundbite from your pre-recorded interview - especially if it's a big radio station that has plenty of other exciting content - so make sure you give them a good one. They usually want 45 words, which takes around 15 seconds to say. Include your most important key message (or two) and make sure you say it confidently, passionately and positively.

## The bridging technique

The interviewer may have a different idea of what they want you to say to what you actually want to say. Ignoring their question is rude, so we use something called the bridging technique:

- [A] acknowledge
- [B] bridge
- [C] change/control

### For example:

**Question** - Vegan activists are really militant, won't you agree?

**Answer** - While there is a small number of activists who use divisive methods [A], they are not representative of the vegan movement as a whole [B]. Veganism is based on values of kindness and compassion and the vast majority of vegans campaign in a positive, peaceful way [C].

**How NOT to answer** - No, this is not true. Actually, we must do whatever it takes to liberate animals and I don't care if I upset someone in the process as it's nothing compared to what the animals go through.

Why is it bad? It sounds negative, too radical, and dismisses non-vegans' feelings. While it is of course true that this is not something that can be compared with animal deaths and suffering, such a response is not going to encourage anyone to go vegan. Stress that most vegans are positive and peaceful instead.

### Phrases to use when using the bridging technique:

- It's promising to see people eating less animal products but...
- Let me tell you why it's good...
- Let me explain how X works
- What I think is important...
- What I'd like to say...
- What we need to look at is...



- What I'm most concerned about is...
- I can see why people think that but...
- The point is...
- To put this in perspective...
- I can't agree with you...
- People have said that, but...

### Good examples

**Question** - What's wrong with cheating once in a while and eating a bit of egg?

**Answer** - Being vegan is an ethical stance where we reject the notion of animals being seen as food. So it doesn't matter so much how little animal products something contains, we still wouldn't eat it because we simply don't see animals as products to be eaten.

**Question** - This report by an independent authority on XXXX showed that veganism is unhealthy.

**Answer** - This is just one report and like with all scientific issues, we know we need to look at a range of evidence to really make up our mind on something. There are also tens if not hundreds of studies that show vegans are generally healthier than the rest of the population. All diets are individual anyway so it's incorrect to say that veganism is unhealthy based on one study.

### When asked about things which are beyond your expertise:

- I'm not here to/not able to comment on that
- I cannot speak for XXX - you should address those issues to XXX specifically. But what I can say is...
- I'm sorry, I don't have this information - I will come back to you on that
- What you're talking about isn't my area of expertise. But what I can say is ...
- I'm sorry, I don't know that. However, I can say...

### If you are interrupted:

- May I finish the point I was making...
- If I may finish the point I was making...
- Can I just say...

### If it's relevant:

- Have you ever been to a slaughterhouse, have you seen how animals are treated and how they die? If we were having this conversation after you've been to a slaughterhouse, I'm sure it would sound very different.