

Title:

7 Tips To Become A Star Tv Guest

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Summary:

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Article Body:

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1. Map out the segment with the producer

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NOTE: Once you've passed the *audition* with a booker you're passed to an associate (or other less senior) producer. Often after that first "audition" you must be screened by producers at higher and higher levels. If you're chosen then you begin to create a segment together.

2. Help the producer shape the segment

*The *backbone* of the spot was my recently published book, SECRETS OF A BEVERLY HILLS COSMETIC SURGEON, The Expert's Guide to Safe, Successful Surgery. The associate producer and I had discussed what I consider to be the non-frivolous and important consumer issues of the book, such as how to select a properly trained surgeon and how to be certain that the facility in which the surgery is to be performed is properly credentialed and hence safe. And even the issue of having an anesthesia specialist in the patient's service to assure comfort and safety. Those are the key gems for the consumer-reader-viewer.*

NOTE: Robert choose important issues of concern to Zahn's audience angling his ideas to suit her show. It's up to you to suggest ideas that would make a great segment. Listen to the producer's ideas and don't be shy about gently suggesting alternatives. A pro-active guest who knows his material is prized. Be sensitive though to how attached the producer is to his idea and suggest yours accordingly.

3. Expect the Unexpected

*On the air, the focus of the segment was somewhat different than I had been lead to expect. Paula Zahn, who is as smart, charming, and attractive off camera as on, was a hospitable and engaging interviewer. However, as comfortable as I was made to be, the questioning by Paula got stuck on *which celebrities have had what done.* And, they put up photos of some selected celebs and asked me to comment on them--including ones I had not seen prior.*

NOTE: Always be prepared for the unexpected. This is a frequent tactic of TV shows. If they had told Robert ahead of time what they were planning he may not have agreed to be their expert. Instead they lead him to believe that they would focus on what he considered important issues. To be fair to the show they may have planned to cover what was discussed, but changed their mind at the last minute. Or they may not have had time or didn't feel it was necessary to inform their guest of show changes.

Also, talk show hosts are expert at making you feel comfortable. It's their job to help you be a good guest (relaxed and credible)--as ones who are nervous don't come across well. A typical tactic is to put you at ease and then ask an unexpected question to get a candid response--which often makes for good television. Be ready. You can be candid and still speak to YOUR talking points.

4. Prepare your answers and bridge to them

*While I have had professional coaching on *guesting,* and understood how to

redirect the questions, I decided to just *go along* with the trail of questions Paula posed. I could see that this was going to be a *light interview,* not hard news. Not that it was distasteful or unpleasant, but, frankly, it seemed redundant and wasteful of audience time. I felt the public deserves more significant information than yet another review of Joan Rivers' ultra--raised eyebrows or Michael Jackson's nose remnant.

While I did not expect a formal *book review* I felt the viewers would have appreciated knowing how to avoid the bad surgical results that everyone is so familiar with.

As I would have told the viewers, *If presumably smart and wealthy people can have such bad cosmetic surgery, how does the *average citizen* avoid it?* In the end, it was not a particularly informative session--a bit fluffy--and I saw that as an opportunity lost. But, hey, while it says Cable NEWS (*italics mine*) Network on the door, it is still first and foremost entertainment. Show biz. So, always be cognizant of that, I just rolled with it and enjoyed myself.*

NOTE: The show wanted the sexy celebrity angle, but Robert could have bridged to the information he thought was important with a phrase such as *Mistakes can happen to anyone, including celebrities like Michael Jackson. To prevent these mishaps for yourself you can*...and then he could have delivered the key points he wanted to cover such as the importance of a good anesthesiologist.

5. Follow the host's lead *and* make your points

*Yes, I could have diverted the conversation and tried to say what I thought needed to be said, but one has to weigh the benefit of taking that path and possibly being disfavored by the program and hence not be welcomed back or just going with the flow knowing that just *being there* and having the cover of the book flashed on screen is quite satisfactory for my purposes of promoting the book.*

NOTE: You can satisfy the host and yourself by balancing the information with what the host wants and what you want. If you transition gracefully by taking a few seconds to comment on their question and then a few seconds to focus on your point everyone will be satisfied.

6. Let the host and show promote your product

*Another unanticipated plus of appearing on the program was that during the entire day, the interview segment was promoted heavily and the repetition of my name throughout the day was a bonus that cannot be disregarded. I saw each

hourly announcement as a *free advertisement.* I was happy.

Bottom line: Breathing or not breathing, dead or alive, being a guest on a nationally televised interview -- regardless of the quality of the interview--is worthwhile to any author or public figure. And, it is fun and a memorable experience for those of us from outside the media world. The producers liked the segment and, after all, it is their show.*

NOTE: Often times guests are overly promotional in an effort to make the most of their on-air time. You won't be invited back if you plug yourself or your product obviously. Find out ahead of time how your product will be positioned on the show. Let the host do the promoting. Your job is to give great information about the product, service or cause that incites your audience to take action.

BEFORE the show, and at the time your booking is confirmed, ask that your website, 800# etc. be displayed on the screen (this is called a chyron). Realize though, that some shows have policies not to do this. Ask also how your product will be positioned on the show. Always bring your product with you in the event they've lost the one you sent. This will insure that your product will get the publicity that you want. Better yet, if you can create interactive scenes that involve your product that are entertaining and witty you will be a hero.

7. Enjoy the recognition and propose a new segment

*Finally, and probably most importantly, my 87 year old parents thought I *looked very good on TV.* They liked my suit and tie selection. So, everyone was happy!*

NOTE: Make your parents proud. The kind of exposure you receive on national shows is invaluable for credibility -- with your parents, competition, clients, and other national shows. And you can increase your recognition by calling up other talk shows and suggesting a different angle of the topic you just covered. Also, while you're in studio propose another segment with a totally new angle. The time to pitch a segment is right then when everyone is happy with your appearance. Try and get a committed date on the spot.