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高等院校双语教材
新闻传播学系列

Creative Interviewing

The Writer's Guide to Gathering
Information by Asking Questions

(Third Edition)

创造性的采访

以提问方式采集
信息者的指南

(第三版)

[美] 肯·梅茨勒 (Ken Metzler) 著
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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

创造性的采访：以提问方式采集信息者的指南：第3版/（美）梅茨勒著；傅玉辉改编。

北京：中国人民大学出版社，2010

高等院校双语教材·新闻传播学系列

ISBN 978-7-300-09676-6

- I. ①创…
- II. ①梅… ②傅…
- III. ①新闻采访 - 双语教学 - 高等学校 - 教材 - 英文
- IV. ①G212.1

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2010) 第 009045 号

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Chuangzaoxing de Caifang

出版发行	中国人民大学出版社		
社 址	北京中关村大街 31 号	邮政编码	100080
电 话	010-62511242 (总编室)		010-62511398 (质管部)
	010-82501766 (邮购部)		010-62514148 (门市部)
	010-62515195 (发行公司)		010-62515275 (盗版举报)
网 址	http://www.crup.com.cn		
	http://www.ttrnet.com (人大教研网)		
经 销	新华书店		
印 刷	北京山润国际印务有限公司		
规 格	215mm × 275mm 16 开本	版 次	2010 年 1 月第 1 版
印 张	15.75 插页 1	印 次	2010 年 1 月第 1 次印刷
字 数	394 000	定 价	29.00 元

出版说明

为了尽快了解和吸收国外新闻传播学的最新研究成果，提高我国新闻传播学的教学研究和实际工作的水平，满足各院校对双语教材在质量和水平上更高的要求，使读者能够读到原汁原味的原版教材，中国人民大学出版社适时推出了这套“高等院校双语教材·新闻传播学系列”丛书。

本丛书所选的图书均系欧美等国外新闻与传播界有影响的知名学者所著，内容涵盖了新闻与传播学各个领域，真实反映了国外新闻与传播学领域的理论研究和实践探索的水平，因而受到了欧美及世界各地的新闻与传播学院师生、新闻从业人员的普遍欢迎，其中大部分版本多次再版，影响深远，历久不衰，成为新闻与传播学的经典教材。

为了适应大学本科生层次的阅读需要，我们在广泛听取有着丰富的双语一线教学经验的教师建议和意见的基础上，对原版教材进行了适当的改编，删掉了一些与中国国情不符和不适合教学的内容，尽量适应了当前国内本科教学的课时需要。

本套教材以下特点尤为突出：

- 保持英文教材的原汁原味。本套丛书根据国内教学需要对原书进行了改编，主要是删减了与中国国情不符和不适合教学的部分，在体系结构与内容版式等方面都保持了原版教材的风貌。
- 简洁的中文导读。本丛书在引进英文原版图书的同时，将简明目录译为中文，同时改编者为其撰写了导读，供读者阅读时参考。
- 篇幅合理，价格适中。本套教材适应教学与读者的实际需要，在内容上进行了删减，总体篇幅更为合理，相对较低的定价，充分考虑到了学生的购买能力，从而使本套丛书更易走近广大读者。
- 强大的教学支持。依托国际出版集团的资源优势，本套教材的原版为教师提供了配套的教辅材料，如教师手册、丰富的网络资源等，使教学更为便捷。

本套丛书是我们在双语教材出版方面所作的一次尝试，其中的编选或有不当之处，真诚的期待广大读者提出宝贵的建议与意见，以便我们改进。另外，需要指出的是，鉴于国外作者所处的政治、经济、文化背景的不同，其观点及内容或有不妥之处，望读者在阅读时注意比较和甄别。

中国人民大学出版社
2009年2月

导言

采访的创造性和创造性的采访

“采、写、编、评”——新闻采访、新闻写作、新闻编辑、新闻评论，是新闻记者的四大基本功，也是新闻传播学专业的四大核心课程。其中的新闻采访则是记者职业技能的重要组成部分，是新闻传播过程的“第一环节”。新闻界素有“七分采访，三分写作”的说法，可见如果没有新闻采访的成果和基础，其后的新闻写作、新闻编辑和新闻评论都将成了无本之木和空中楼阁。

新闻采访的职业技能在记者的职业生涯中是不可或缺的。从《创造性的采访：以提问方式采集信息者的指南》（第三版，下称《创造性的采访》）一书来看，创造性采访是该书作者——美国俄勒冈大学新闻传播学院肯·梅茨勒（Ken Metzler）教授提出的一种理想的采访境界。从整个新闻传播的逻辑链条上看，新闻采访的重要性不言而喻；从一个新闻从业者个体的角度来看，新闻采访也同样具有不可替代的价值。总之，创造性采访是新闻传播活动的重要基础。如果记者不能创造性地进行采访，就难以出色地完成记者所承担的职业使命。

基于以上原因，《创造性的采访》（第三版）才会在新闻传播学的课程体系中受到广泛重视。梅茨勒教授曾在美国俄勒冈大学获新闻学学士学位，并有过五年的新闻记者从业经历，早在1972年即开始讲授新闻采访课程。从这个意义上说，《创造性的采访》（第三版）是作者在新闻采访的理论知识、实务经验和教学实践成果不断积累的基础之上，历经时间检验所形成的经典性的新闻采访实务教学框架。

一、采访的创造性：行之以术

显而易见，新闻采访的本质是为了追求事实真相，而在获得新闻真实的过程中，创造性采访则是获得新闻真相的重要途径。创造性之于采访，是技巧层面的“术”，还是思维模式的“道”？这是一个值得思考的有意思的话题。我认为，存在于采访过程各个方面和各个环节的创造性，应该是新闻记者必备的专业技巧和职业素养，是“术”的层面的东西。比如梅茨勒教授曾指出：“提问的性质决定了回答的性质。”可见在采访过程中创造性提问所具有的重要性，而创造性提问本身就显示着一种独到的新闻记者的采访技巧。采访各个环节的创造性则构成了创造性采访，创造性采访是新闻记者职业素养的一个重要方面，因此这种基于真实的创造性是贯穿新闻记者职业生涯的“道”，在真实基础上的创造性也可以看做是贯穿记者职业生涯的一条红线。而创造性采访最终是通过对于新闻本质和事实真相执著顽强的追求才得以完成的。

也许不具有采访亲身体验的人，凭直觉会认为采访不过是一种即兴空洞、随手拈来的对话，或者是充满插科打诨、脱口秀式谈吐机锋的交谈。但是真正有过采访实践或者有着成功采访实践的人都知道，采访的过程其实是艰难的，成功的采访尤其需要付出更多的努力乃至不为人道的艰辛。梅茨勒教授之所以数十年来专注于新闻采访研究，就是因为他发现，一些刚刚接触新闻采访的年轻记者害怕采访诸如政府官员和不经意间被卷入新闻事件的普通人等采访对象，并且在新闻采访过程中还存在着一系列诸如此类的问题。而梅茨勒教授对于采访过程中的这些难题的不断破解则成就了

《创造性的采访》（第三版）一书的问世及其广泛传播。

我国著名历史学家司马迁在《报任安书》中曾经述说过他撰写《史记》的意图：“亦欲以究天人之际，通古今之变，成一家之言。”这其实就是司马迁研究历史的理想境界。而在某种意义上，作为人类文明重要组成部分的新闻传播活动的目的之一也是要探究自然、社会和人的种种真实和本质。沿着司马迁的理想坐标，我们可以来探究一下新闻采访的本质是什么，我认为，新闻采访是探究世界和人心本相的有效途径，是在人类社会进行信息沟通的有效手段，是突破信息阻隔、超越传播限制、获得新闻事实、揭示新闻真相的重要方式。在人类社会中，作为新闻采访活动组织者的记者，其职能就是以新闻信息交往的方式与人、社会、自然打交道。如果记者不能掌握包括新闻采访在内的新闻传播活动的基本游戏规则，那又怎么谈得上进行创造性的采访？

在新闻采访的实践中，采访的创造性可谓无所不在，采访的创造性体现在采访的所有细节之中。可见采访的创造性是记者职业技巧和职业精神在采访细节中的具体体现。只有在深厚的职业素养和充分准备的基础之上，创造性采访才有可能得以实现。采访技巧的训练和积累是必要的，是记者职业生涯的一项基础性工作，而采访过程中所有创造性细节的积累和连缀则构成了创造性采访。

二、创造性的采访：贯之以道

采访的方式对于大多数人来说并不陌生。因为我们平常所看到的许多新闻内容都和采访的方式有关，而电视新闻中的采访现象更是比比皆是，但是究竟什么是采访的本质，却容易为人们所忽视。其实采访是记者和采访对象之间进行的一种目的性极强的、专业性的新闻信息的交往活动。在采访过程中，创造性如何体现，是每一名记者都非常关注和经常思索的问题。

梅茨勒教授在《创造性的采访》（第三版）中所给出的采访定义是：“代表背后的观众，双方以对话的形式来交换信息，以达到任何一方都无法独自达到的知晓程度。”该定义对采访过程中的“创造性”进行了概括，认为这种“创造性”体现了新闻采访的独到价值。正是因为新闻记者和采访对象一起构造了一种具有创造性的采访氛围，新闻采访才能达到一种“任何一方都无法独自达到”的对于新闻真实的揭示和呈现。美国记者威廉·曼彻斯特曾说：“真正第一流的采访可以让一个能言善辩的采访对象如醉如痴。”这种描述也可以让我们从一个侧面窥探创造性采访的迷人境界。

因此，从梅茨勒教授的采访定义出发，可以发现新闻记者采访过程最为重要的事情就是：时刻不要忘记探究新闻的真相，时刻不要忘记新闻记者的职业角色。具体说来，记者在新闻采访中应该把握以下几个要点：首先，不要忘记新闻采访的主体性。采访者是采访活动的组织者和推动者，是采访和谐氛围的创造者和营造者，而记者在采访过程中一定不要忘记或忽略这种采访的主体性。其次，不要忘记新闻采访的公共性。记者采访的行为不是某个个人的私人行为，而是代表无法出面的广大读者来提出问题的公共行为。第三，不要忘记新闻采访的目的性。在采访过程中，记者不要忘记自己是来干什么的，不能一味顺遂采访对象的思维方向而偏离了采访的主题。第四，在新闻采访过程中不要忘记细心观察和侧耳倾听。不要让你的采访淹没在自己的高谈阔论之中，而是要注意观察和倾听，捕捉和新闻采访主题相关的每一个细节。第五，不要忘记新闻采访过程的不可预测性。采访者接触的采访对象大都是自己没有直接交往过的人（不管是名人或者普通人），因此采访过程中往往充满不确定性。即使是非常充分完备的采访设计，也难以和真实的采访进程完全合拍，所以要想作为一名优秀的记者，还要在采访实践中不断锻炼机警的头脑和灵活的应变能力才行。

只有真正掌握游戏规则的人，在运用游戏规则的时候才能得心应手。《宋史·岳飞传》记载，岳飞曾对宗泽说：“阵而后战，兵法之常，运用之妙，存乎一心。”这里的“运用之妙，存乎一心”，其实就是既把握规则又“超越”规则的一种创造性运用规则的方式，是一种创造性思维模式在应对复杂现象时的具体呈现。在新闻传播的实践中，创造性采访不是无所依傍的天马行空，而是深深根植于新闻真实性土壤的，具有长久生命力的缤纷之花。真实性，是新闻采访的最高原则，也是新闻采访的终极要求。《中国新闻工作者职业道德准则》指出：“真实是新闻的生命。”《美国职业新闻工作者协会章程》宣称：“真实是我们的最终目标。”在《创造性的采访》（第三版）中，

“真实”也成为梅茨勒教授一再强调的理想采访境界的特征之一。在《创造性的采访》（第三版）中，梅茨勒教授指出：“如果用两个字来说明《创造性的采访》第三版与前两个版本的区别，那应该是——‘真实’。再多用一些字眼，那就是‘力求真实’。25年来，我始终将新闻采访作为一个课题潜心研究，也因此对它的真实性愈加关注。”该书的最后两章对新闻真实的重要性做了特别强调。梅茨勒教授不但对记者采访的道德标准给予了更多的关注，而且还就采访者怎样做才能更加接近事实的真相等问题进行了阐述。由此可见，梅茨勒教授在“真实”方面的深刻思索和反复强调是读者在阅读和学习《创造性的采访》（第三版）一书时要格外留意的地方。

一言以蔽之，创造性采访，就是以创造性采访的方式求事实之真，而不能以“创造性”的方式造新闻之假。如果脱离了新闻真实，即使再有妙笔生花的圣手，所“创造”的文字也不名一文。只有符合新闻真实性原则的创造性采访才具有新闻传播的真正意义，而以“创造性”的方式造假的新闻采访，则无疑背离了新闻的真实性原则和新闻传播的本义，并走向了人类追求新闻真实意图的反面。

三、创造性采访的未来：在真实的基石上创造

记者的职业，表面看起来是一个不断追逐最新新闻信息的职业，但这并不是记者职业内涵的全部。其实，记者的职业是一个在不断追踪现实真相的过程中，以新闻的方式勾勒历史轮廓和人类发展走向的职业。在历史和未来之间，在虚拟和现实之间，新闻记者承担着为公众提供信息服务的使命和责任，而进行创造性采访则成为记者实现其历史使命的重要依托。

在人类新闻传播史上，创造性采访一直是新闻传播事业的亮点之一。纵观世界新闻传播史，我们可以看到开创和延续创造性采访传统的记者在历史中穿梭与跃进的动人身影。不管是爱德加·斯诺（Edgar Snow，1905—1972年）、奥莉娅娜·法拉奇（Oriana Fallaci，1929—2006年），还是范长江（1909—1970年）、穆青（1921—2003年），他们都在不同的时代以一种创造性采访的方式、以一种执著的职业信念，追寻着掩藏在大千世界和芸芸众生表象下的新闻本质，追寻着历史和社会滚滚洪流中的真相之光和思想之火。可见，正是通过创造性采访，公众才得以通过新闻传播的方式了解世界和社会的真实面貌。坚持新闻的真实性，是对新闻采访最基本、也是最重要的要求之一。而创造性采访的基础则是坚持新闻的客观真实性。如果脱离了新闻真实性的基石，成为闭门造车、无中生有的“明星记者”，那只能是自欺欺人的一现昙花，这种反面的例子在国内外新闻传播界都屡见不鲜。可见，创造性采访的真实性基石不可动摇，创造性采访的真实性边界不可逾越。只有在新闻真实性的基础和框架内，创造性采访才合乎新闻传播职业规范和新闻事业发展的真正需要。

创造性采访展现着记者职业生涯的生命力和创造力。在新闻传播的未来世界里，创造性采访将继续塑造记者职业生涯的前进轨迹，并将持续推动新闻传播事业的活跃前行。由此，我们相信创造性采访的未来让人充满期待，她将以自己不同凡响的历程来诠释其生生不息的，基于新闻真实和记者良知的生命力。

For Betty Jane

"Look up there—a patch of blue. I do believe it's brightening up."



Preface

One word distinguishes this third edition of *Creative Interviewing* from the two previous editions: “truth.” Or “pursuit of truth,” if I’m allowed three. In the twenty-five years I have concentrated on journalistic interviewing as a topic of inquiry, I’ve become increasingly concerned about truth. What is it? How do you define it? How do you apply it to journalism? Most important, is it enhanced or impeded by the variety of interview practices common to journalism? What inspired this change? Mostly the fact that the public today sees much more of interviewers in action than ever before. Ever more broadcast shows employ questions and answers. These include acerbic talk shows—shouting matches oftentimes. Or you can watch clever people use the Q-A dialogue to match wits just for laughs. Occasionally you can even watch serious forums for discussion of public events. In all such examples, the public has come to recognize that the nature of the question often dictates the nature of the answer. Jocular questions beget jocular answers. Belligerent questions beget defensive answers. How does truth fare in that arena? How does truth fare under the long-standing premise that the work of the journalist is essentially adversarial? The premise suggests that reporters and sources are enemies and that the journalistic interview represents a grand chess game of thrust and counterthrust, advance and retreat, win or lose. We may want to rethink those tactics if our journalistic objective is to tell the truth without fear or favor.

I like to think of the changes in the third edition as a slight course correction, like a ship captain steering three or four degrees left or right. The changes might seem slight at first, but some of the scenery will be different. Among the changes is an increasing concern for the ethics of the journalistic interview. It’s a concern fueled by increasingly prevalent examples, primarily on television, of such shady tactics as the hidden camera sting, the ambush interview, and the *screaming meemies*, the term I use to cover television’s more boisterous talk shows. The new emphasis on pursuit of truth drew further inspiration from a

research project I undertook in 1990. I talked with frequently interviewed news sources, particularly those who had risen from obscurity to moments of fame. One “reward” of fame—*true* celebrityhood—is that tabloid journals will talk about you without bothering to interview you. Consider the ethics of that. And what does it mean when an interviewer tells a source, “Just between you and me—whisper the answer to me,” when the whispered answer is heard by millions? Interviewing behavior represents what one journalism professor, Lee Wilkins of Missouri, calls the “great black hole of journalism ethics” because it has received so little attention. So two new chapters deal with the ethics of the interview. Chapter 20 deals specifically with ethics; Chapter 21 adds some thoughts about truth: how some show business celebrities and others see it, and how interviewers can come closer to it.

Another change embraces new technology. The computer network known as the Internet has opened journalistic horizons in spectacular ways. And this has brought another new chapter to this book, *Electronic Aids to Interviewing* (Chapter 15), depicting not only a dramatic example of an E-mail interview with a scientist at the South Pole, but dealing with a new journalistic beat—the Internet. Talk about new journalistic horizons—it’s a whole new world out there.

Another innovation of this third edition comes as a result of my extensive interviews with news media sources. Quite a few case histories depict how interviews feel from the other side of the fence—the source’s side. I’m indebted to many erstwhile celebrities for their insights and their descriptions of interview experiences. One of them is a young woman named Melissa Rathbun Coleman, the U.S. Army’s first female enlisted prisoner of war who enjoyed neither her celebrity status nor the media attention. “I would rather be back in the Iraqi prison than be in the prison the media have created for me,” she once remarked. She flatly turned down more than 100 requests for interviews including Phil Donahue’s and Maury Povich’s, but granted a few interviews, including one with me. Her experience dramatizes the best and the worst practices in journalistic information-gathering methods. Her story appears in Chapter 20.

In this new edition you’ll find updated examples and references to new research, including three new studies that focus directly on the journalistic interview. Some examples have not changed since the first edition, however, because responses from readers suggest that they contain useful lessons. We are still talking about achieving greater candor among sources by spilling your coffee. This has become a symbol that suggests one journalistic truth—show a little of your own human vulnerability if you expect sources to show theirs.

The original idea for this book came from the discovery that college journalism students have a dread of talking with people in what they perceive as the “formal” interview situation. That is why the stories they wrote for the magazine writing classes I taught then came out so dull and flat, representing the barren snowfields of abstraction rather than the warm enclaves of human experience. I hope this book, and classroom experiences based on this book,

will persuade you to remove the “formal” from the interviewing experience. Interviewing is just people talking, sometimes barefooted people. I hope the experiences will introduce you to the wonderful world of—well, to the wonderful world, period. Journalism is the last “cool” profession. It’s fun. It encourages you to meet new people—people you’d never meet under ordinary circumstances, from kings on their thrones to prisoners in the lockup, as Mark Twain suggested.

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Information in this book comes from a wide variety of sources—so wide that I’m awed by the prospect of winnowing into manageable chapters the mountains of material derived from people ranging from ministers to child killers in addition to reporters, editors, and social science researchers. Sources of any nonfiction book have remained standard despite the new technology. You consult primary (unpublished) or secondary (published) documents. You talk to people—the right people, the ones who can introduce you to new horizons. You ask lots of questions. You immerse yourself in relevant experiences. You observe. You experiment, informally or systematically, and you record the results of the experimentation. You then synthesize the diverse bits of information to form a mosaic that represents the thrust of your message.

Immersion? For more than forty years of professional journalism I have gathered information by asking questions. I’ve been interviewed a good deal myself, both by student interviewers and by the media.

Experiments? I have constantly experimented in interviewing classes at the University of Oregon, even to the point of encouraging students to “fail” (and obtain good grades in the process) by trying special approaches to interviews such as asking questions in a loud, arrogant manner to see if kicking information out of sources works better than the softer, more permissive approaches recommended in this text. (It doesn’t.) Some experiments failed miserably. Several times I tried to arrange with newspaper reporters to recall their innermost thoughts while conducting interviews—in much the same way reporters ask athletes, “What were you thinking as you approached the finish line en route to a new American record in the 5,000-meter race?” Well, reporters like to ask those questions, but I guess they don’t like to answer them.

Talking to people? I talked to journalists who suddenly found themselves thrust into the media spotlight, and almost without exception they became quite nervous about being interviewed. Some confessed feelings bordering on terror. “A request for an interview is a red alert for me,” says Jon Franklin, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner. Such reactions offer new meaning to the word “irony.”

Observation? Easy. Watching TV—every night on television brings the best and worst of interviewing techniques. Viewing videotapes of interviews. Listening to print reporters’ tape-recorded sessions or reading transcripts

where available. Watching news conferences. Even noting the way ordinary citizens ask questions of one another (often poorly, with wretchedly biased assumptions).

Documentation? The bibliography continues to grow as the result of continued reports of interviewing experiences and experiments. Most of the research comes from fields other than journalism/mass communication, namely social science fields such as psychology and anthropology. However, some new research relates directly to journalism.

Synthesis? The new perspectives have merely confirmed principles that have remained largely the same throughout these three editions. Good preparation for interviews, sympathetic nonjudgmental listening, and responding with interest and questions to what is being said—those in a nutshell remain the appropriate patterns.

Every author owes a debt of gratitude to others who have generously assisted in the preparation of his or her material. The list could reach thousands, especially if you consider the students and professional journalists who have participated in interviewing seminars and workshops over the past twenty-five years. I've conducted many—from New York to New Zealand—and have learned from everyone.

And I've read widely. Books and documents consulted for this work are listed in the bibliography.

I calculate that I've interviewed about 300 news sources over a course of twenty-five years on the topic of relationships with the media. About 200 of them were interviewed since 1990 by phone with the financial assistance of the Freedom Forum, for which I offer thanks. Those whose comments I found directly useful in the content of this new edition are listed in the back of the book. Specifically, I'd also like to thank the following:

Michael Thoele, Oregon author, former newspaperman, extraordinary interviewer. Down through the years I've absorbed so many of the Thoele principles of interviewing that I confess I'm not always sure which are mine and which are borrowed from Mike.

Also Don Bishoff, columnist at *The Register-Guard* in Eugene, Oregon; Jack Hart of *The Oregonian*; and Melody Ward Leslie, of Eugene, journalist and quintessential interview respondent.

Jim Upshaw, Alan Stavitsky, and Karl Nestvold, all University of Oregon faculty colleagues who specialize in broadcast reporting and interviewing—they offered advice on broadcast interviewing methods. Tom Bivins, another faculty colleague—thanks for the illustrations. John Russial, also a faculty colleague, former newspaper copyeditor—editor to the end, he combed through several chapters of this book correcting typos and offering useful suggestions. Steve Ponder, my river rafting buddy—many thanks for surfing the Internet and finding choice items for textbook display.

Sharon Brock of Ohio State University—thanks for reading chapters and offering valuable suggestions. (We had lovely e-mail discussions on “What is truth?” a topic on which we never could agree.)

Lisa McCormack, former Washington newspaper writer—thanks for helping me meet lots of important people.

Thanks to the readers of previous editions—John L. Griffith, Del Brinkman, Al Hester, Kenneth S. Devol, David Rubin, and John F. Dillon.

Special thanks to Joe Opiela of Allyn & Bacon, an encouraging kind of editor—the best kind if you’re a writer.

Though many years have passed, I remain grateful to *The Honolulu Advertiser*, which generously took me on as a “special writer” during a sabbatical leave in 1974–75, an experience that led to the first edition of *Creative Interviewing* (1977).

My wife, Betty Jane—thanks for being my life-long pal.

And special thanks to our three children. In earlier years, I thanked them for trying to be quiet around the house while I wrote. Now they’ve grown up, have become productive citizens, and have developed splendid expertise in their respective fields. Barbara, the first-born, works for a business consulting firm called Strategic Decisions Group at Menlo Park, California. She served as consultant for Chapter 8, which deals with preparation for an important interview with a prominent if hypothetical business executive. Scott is a civil engineer in Eugene, Oregon, who runs a branch office of a California engineering firm called Biggs Cardoza. He provided insight into the nature of “tech-talk,” the kind reporters must learn if they are to cover public affairs. And Doug, the youngest, works for Microsoft Corporation near Seattle; he patiently led me through the twisted streets and backroads of the Internet and thus provided valuable assistance for Chapter 15, *Electronic Aids to Interviewing*. Also helping in that task were Doug’s computer pal, Eric (Cygnus) Swanson of San Francisco, and Mick Westrick, computer genius for the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Oregon.

Many others who contributed to this book are quoted by name in the succeeding pages. Let it be emphasized that the author takes full responsibility for any errors that may appear in this book.

Ken Metzler

简明目录

前言	i
第1章 你采访的问题何在?	1
第2章 何谓采访?	9
第3章 采访的十个步骤	15
第4章 采访要素——个案史	24
第5章 提问	33
第6章 采访中的对话动力学	45
第7章 接受采访	56
第8章 采访设计	68
第9章 失败的教训	79
第10章 学会倾听	84
第11章 新闻观察	92
第12章 引语和轶事的采访	101
第13章 电话采访、采访记录与采访录音	111
第14章 特殊问题	122
第15章 电子辅助采访	133
第16章 广播电视采访	144
第17章 特定新闻领域的采访	153
第18章 多重采访项目	164
第19章 人物采访	172
第20章 采访伦理	182
第21章 通向事实真相的十个步骤	194
附录A 采访练习	205
附录B 采访报告范例	211
参考文献	217
本书所提及的采访	224



Brief Contents

Preface	i
1 What's Your Interviewing Problem?	1
2 What Is an Interview?	9
3 The Ten Stages of the Interview	15
4 Elements of the Interview: A Case History	24
5 Asking Questions	33
6 The Conversational Dynamics of Interviewing	45
7 Being Interviewed	56
8 Planning Your Interview	68
9 Lessons from Failure	79
10 Learning to Listen	84
11 Journalistic Observation	92
12 Interviewing for Quotes and Anecdotes	101
13 Telephoning, Note-Taking, and Taping	111
14 Special Problems	122
15 Electronic Aids to Interviewing	133
16 The Broadcast Interview	144
17 Interviewing on a Newsbeat	153
18 Multiple-Interview Projects	164
19 The Personality Interview	172
20 Ethics of the Interview	182
21 Ten Steps toward Truth	194
Appendix A: Interviewing Exercises	205
Appendix B: Sample Interview Report	211
Bibliography	217
Interviews	224



Contents

Preface	i
1 What's Your Interviewing Problem?	1
<i>The obvious problems</i>	4
<i>The hidden problems</i>	6
2 What Is an Interview?	9
<i>Nonjudgmental demeanor: the basic principle</i>	10
<i>How journalists obtain information</i>	11
<i>Illustrating the journalistic interview</i>	12
<i>The creative interview</i>	12
<i>The creative question</i>	13
<i>Types of interviews: directive and nondirective</i>	14
3 The Ten Stages of the Interview	15
1. <i>Defining the purpose of the interview</i>	16
2. <i>Conducting background research</i>	16
3. <i>Requesting an interview appointment</i>	17
4. <i>Planning the interview</i>	18
5. <i>Meeting your respondent: breaking the ice</i>	19
6. <i>Asking your first questions</i>	20
7. <i>Establishing an easy rapport</i>	21
8. <i>Asking the bomb</i>	22
9. <i>Recovering from the bomb</i>	22
10. <i>Concluding the interview</i>	22
4 Elements of the Interview: A Case History	24
<i>Defining the purpose</i>	25
<i>Background research</i>	25

	<i>Planning the interview</i>	26
	<i>On the phone</i>	28
	<i>Some points to remember</i>	31
5	Asking Questions	33
	<i>Phrase your questions simply and clearly</i>	35
	<i>Open versus closed questions</i>	36
	<i>Sequencing of questions: the funnel</i>	36
	<i>Opening questions</i>	37
	<i>Filter questions</i>	38
	<i>Probe (follow-up) questions</i>	38
	<i>Factual questions: the five W's</i>	39
	<i>Conceptually defining questions</i>	40
	<i>Number questions</i>	41
	<i>Reflective questions</i>	42
	<i>Creative questions</i>	42
	<i>Leading, loaded, and junkpile questions</i>	43
6	The Conversational Dynamics of Interviewing	45
	<i>The value of research</i>	47
	<i>Scanning the literature of interviewing</i>	49
	<i>The place of the gentle question</i>	51
	<i>Nonverbal communication</i>	52
	<i>Essentials of personal communication</i>	55
7	Being Interviewed	56
	<i>Plight of the sudden celebrity</i>	58
	<i>Why be interviewed?</i>	59
	<i>A national organization for news sources?</i>	61
	<i>Interviewee preparation</i>	63
	<i>Interview gamesmanship</i>	63
	<i>Final points</i>	65
8	Planning Your Interview	68
	<i>Planning starts with purpose</i>	69
	<i>Requesting the appointment</i>	71
	<i>Do your homework</i>	73
	<i>Assessing character and interests</i>	74
	<i>Preparing areas of inquiry</i>	74
	<i>Anticipating answers</i>	75
	<i>The game plan</i>	76
	<i>Keep your plans flexible</i>	77
	<i>A planning footnote</i>	78