



4 Painless Ways to Prepare for Your Pageant Interview

By Valerie Hayes, The Pageant Coach™

You've sent in the entry forms, written the check, and shopped for your wardrobe. You have thumbed thru magazines looking for hairstyles and tried on all the suits you currently own, as well as some your friends own. Now it's time to start thinking about preparing for "The Interview". The interview competition makes you pace the hall, gives you sweaty palms, and can give even the most experienced pageant contestant a headache. But how will you ever find time to prepare? Where do you start? It can feel so overwhelming that you may hope the judges love your gown so much that they toss out the interview scores and just give you the crown!

Okay, take a deep breath, relax your shoulders and follow these 4 Painless Interview Preparation Steps:

1. **Watch the morning and/or evening news.** This is an easy way to get some "free training time" while you're doing something else. Tune in your favorite news station while getting dressed for work or school in the morning. Or you could check out the morning news while eating breakfast. If you're an early riser I recommend CNN's American Morning. It has complete news coverage without a lot of fluff. Later in the morning try NBC's The Today Show, or ABC's Good Morning, America. Both programs have complete current events coverage as well as entertainment and pop culture news. (If you're a teen contestant you may find CNN a little dry, stick to The Today Show or Good Morning America.) In the evening, try watching TV while you're changing clothes after school or while you're preparing dinner. And I know you're working out; kill two birds with one stone and switch on the news while you're sweating and dreaming of thinner thighs. Make certain you are watching a national news broadcast (ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, Fox) as well as a local station. If you're really stuck for time, try listening to news radio while you're in the car. News radio regularly gives a full update on the hour and at 30 minutes past the hour.



2. **Read the first page of your local Sunday newspaper.** If your hometown newspaper is anything like mine, it would take you half the day to read the whole paper. Read just the first page while you're sipping your juice or morning coffee. Maybe you have time for a little reading during the week on the bus or while riding in the carpool. You might plan to keep reading material in your backpack and get a few minutes in while waiting at the bus stop. If something on the first page of the paper interests you or is relevant to your platform read any follow-up articles on the following pages.
3. **Practice your interview questions standing or sitting in your "interview" position.** Will you be sitting during the interview competition? Or will you be standing in a panel-style interview? Find out what the interview format is and practice your questions a few times prior to the pageant standing or sitting the same way you will be in the interview. Once you're at the competition you'll feel more at ease and be able to focus on the questions instead of worrying about how you're standing or sitting.
4. **Schedule time on your calendar to practice interview questions at least twice a week.** If you have time specifically set aside to practice you're more likely to actually do it. Good intentions are just that, good intentions, but going over those questions requires time set aside just for practice. Maybe you decide to practice five questions each night right before bed. Or perhaps you practice questions while you're working out or driving in the car (I know one contestant who puts on her cell phone headset so she doesn't look like she's talking to herself!). Maybe you and a friend get together over lunch to practice questions. Keep copies of practice questions in your backpack and take them out while you're waiting for your ride after gymnastics or voice class. Maybe you have to go to your brother's basketball game and he's got to arrive 30 minutes before the game; take out your practice questions and go over them in your mind while you're waiting for the game to start. Just make certain you actually have time scheduled for practicing those questions; you'll feel more prepared and score higher on your interview.

Just follow these four easy, pain free steps and you'll be on your way to a solid interview score! And if you're looking for another easy way to be a top contestant, don't miss my internet talk radio show, Pageant Talk Radio. We talk about everything you need to know to be an elite contestant. Here's the link to listen: www.PageantTalkRadio.com. Enjoy the show!