

Radio Presenter interview questions

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What to expect

Radio presenter interviews mix a look at your on-air craft with practical checks on how you handle the unpredictable parts of live broadcast: guests, technical hitches and difficult callers. Expect the panel to probe both your editorial judgment and your comfort with the desk itself.

- **Process:** How you prepare, structure and run a show, including working with producers and rundown sheets.
- **Behavioural:** Past examples of handling live on-air situations, guests or feedback, usually asked as 'tell me about a time'.
- **Scenario:** Hypothetical live-to-air problems, such as a cancelled guest or a technical fault, testing judgement under time pressure.
- **Technical:** Familiarity with the mixing console, automation software and editing tools like Adobe Audition.
- **Client-facing:** Handling difficult callers, sponsors or listener complaints while staying on brand and on schedule.

Most stations start with a review of your demo reel or audition tape, then move to a panel interview with the program director and a producer covering your background and on-air style. Many will follow with a short live or studio trial, reading copy or handling a mock interview, before making an offer.

1. Walk me through how you prepare for a typical show.

Why they ask

Program directors want to see a repeatable process, not just raw talent on air.

How to structure your answer

Answer as a step-by-step walkthrough: research and content planning, liaising with producers on the rundown, prepping interview questions, checking copy, and final desk and equipment checks before going live.

Example answer

"I start the day before by looking at what's happening locally and nationally so I've got real talking points, not filler. On show day I meet the producer to confirm the rundown, sort out guest timing and check any commercial copy I need to read. Before I go live I do a quick check of the console levels and headset, load the playlist into the automation system, and run through my opening links so the first few minutes feel tight rather than improvised."

2. Tell me about a time a guest interview didn't go as planned.

Why they ask

Interviews rarely go exactly to script, so the panel wants proof you can recover without listeners noticing.

How to structure your answer

STAR: describe the situation and task, the specific action you took to keep the segment on track, and the result for the show or audience.

Example answer

"I had a guest booked for a ten-minute segment who turned out to be extremely nervous and gave one-word answers to everything. I dropped my prepared question list and started asking about a specific story I knew about her work instead of general questions, which got her talking properly. The

segment ran the full length and a few listeners messaged in afterwards saying it was one of the better interviews that week."

3. A scheduled guest cancels five minutes before you're due to cross to them live. What do you do?

Why they ask

Tests judgement under time pressure and whether you can fill air time without panicking or leaving dead air.

How to structure your answer

Judgement-under-pressure structure: state the immediate priority, the fallback content or format you'd use, and how you'd communicate the change to the team and listeners.

Example answer

"My first move is to tell the producer straight away so we're not both scrambling separately. Then I'd pull something we already had ready to go, like a listener callback segment or a pre-recorded piece, and frame the change on air as naturally as possible rather than apologising repeatedly. Afterwards I'd flag it with the producer so we can try to reschedule the guest rather than losing the content altogether."

4. How comfortable are you operating a mixing console and automation software, and how would you describe your editing workflow in Adobe Audition?

Why they ask

Confirms hands-on broadcast technical skills beyond presenting ability.

How to structure your answer

Technical walkthrough: name the tools you use regularly, then describe your actual workflow from raw recording to finished segment.

Example answer

"I run my own desk day to day, using the mixing console for live levels and the station's automation software to trigger music beds and ad breaks. For anything pre-recorded, I edit in Adobe Audition: I cut dead air and stumbles first, clean up levels, then add any music or sound effects before exporting it in the format the automation system needs."

5. How do you handle a difficult or abusive caller while you're live on air?

Why they ask

Presenters need to protect the show and other listeners without losing composure on air.

How to structure your answer

De-escalation approach: describe how you'd manage the caller in the moment, the decision point for cutting them off, and how you'd address it with listeners afterwards.

Example answer

"I stay calm and keep my tone steady rather than matching their energy, and I'll try to redirect the conversation once. If they keep escalating or it's clearly not going to settle down, I'll cut the call and move straight into the next segment rather than dwelling on it. I might make a brief, neutral comment to listeners so it doesn't feel like something was hidden, but I won't relitigate it on air."

6. How do you use social media to build a show's audience between broadcasts?

Why they ask

Presenters are expected to extend the show's reach beyond the broadcast slot itself.

How to structure your answer

Strategy explanation: outline what content you post, how it ties back to the on-air show, and how you work with the marketing team on it.

Example answer

"I post short clips from interviews or funny on-air moments that give people a reason to tune in live, plus behind-the-scenes content that makes the show feel more personal. I work with the marketing team on timing posts around peak listening times and tag guests where it makes sense, since that usually gets the biggest reach. I also read listener comments and bring some of that feedback back into the show itself."