Twitter Thread by Dolapo Oni (Retired Nigerian)



Dolapo Oni (Retired Nigerian)
@Dolarpo



When you do media training for TV interviews, you learn some of the tactics for avoiding difficult questions. I'm speaking about
- deflection
- bridging
- deferring
These skills are key when you face high-level interviews on media.

Deflection is usually the easiest.

Q: Didn't you say Bitcoin was going to keep rising to $100k?
A: That's one thing I actually wanted to talk about. We are pretty rigorous with our research. In fact, recently, we upgraded our research platform with an AI System...

Bridging as the name implies means you connect from the question and move away to what you want to focus on. The emphasis on connecting the question to your answer is the key difference with deflection, which takes a sharp turn away from the question right from the beginning.

Q: Categorically, do you believe Nigeria can solve its power issue?
A: Categorically speaking, Nigeria's problem with power needs a proper definition. Is it Generation or transmission or tariffs? or Financing or a lack of political will? I think if we take the telecoms ndustry...

Deferring is the default practice for non-comms people when faced with a question about their company or a subject they don't want to talk about. This involves notifying the interviewer that there is someone better equipped to answer and that your response does not represent..

the views of the organization or group.

Q: So, at what point does XYZbank intend to raise more capital to achieve more growth across their operations?
A: Thanks for asking however I believe our investor relations teams have a press release/briefing that better answers this.

Then you can bridge to something else.

A: ...however like most banks, we are keen to tap into the emerging themes across the region. I think banking as a whole is set for a major paradigm shift in the retail space. Fintechs, Cryptocurrencies, Big Data are all exciting themes...

Speaking to media is usually a stressful event for many but there are ways to overcome that stress and have a good interview.

1) Practise your intro. The likelihood of a bad interview starts with how you respond to that first question/comment - 'Thanks for joining the show...'

I have a standard 'Thanks for having me'. Find out what works for you. Keep it brief and simple. The interviewer wants to get on with the show as fast as possible and will often interrupt if longer. Practice that intro.

2) Match the interviewer's energy. When you are able to achieve this, the chemistry tends to make for a really great interview. Your interviewer would likely not be laid-back and speaking in a low register, so you shouldn't (except you're a politician - different class for this)

3) Keep the answers short. State your most critical point first then expand. If you have time, add more points. You don't always have time to build an argument with minor logic and precepts that crescendo into a main conclusion.

On a more preparatory tone, dress well and request questions or an area of focus from the interviewer to avoid those difficult situations, when you will have to deflect or otherwise. If there's time, the interviewer will circle back to the question and you have to still answer.