

## Interview Instructions

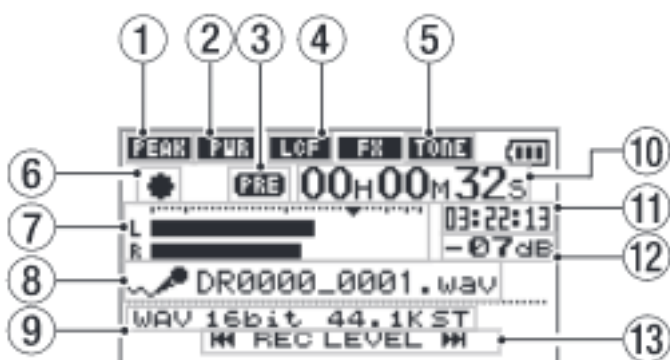
What follows are basic instructions for interviewers. Read the whole packet before beginning your first interview. In the interview space (Thursday: right outside the Duluth Room, Friday-Sunday: Board Room 1), there should be two Tascam DR-05 recorders, one Zoom H4N recorder, AA batteries, some headphones, and, in two separate containers, micro SD cards. If you aren't sure where to find these things, ask Eric Detweiler or, if he isn't around, the interviewer(s) you're taking over for.

**If an urgent issue arises with the equipment or other aspects of the interview process, text or call Eric Detweiler at [phone number redacted for digital publication].**

1. Greet your interviewee and find a convenient, relatively quiet spot for the interview.
2. Prepare and start audio recorder. Separate instructions for the 2 Tascams and the Zoom H4N are included on pages 2 and 3 of this document.
3. Once the device is recording, state your name, your interviewee's name, and the date and time.
4. Conduct the interview, using the provided template questions (page 4 of this packet) and your own follow-ups/improvised questions as appropriate.
5. When the interview is over, hit the stop button to stop the recording (on both the Tascams and the Zoom, this button is labelled with the square "stop" symbol).
6. On page 5 of this packet, write down your name, the interviewee's name, and the file name. On the Tascam, the file name is displayed to the left of a music note symbol. On the Zoom, the file name displays just underneath the battery power icon, and should begin with "STE-." With both recorders, file names should end with ".wav."
7. If your shift is over, turn off the recorder and return it and this packet to the table where other equipment is gathered. If the micro SD card you used is nearly full, put it in the container SD card container marked "full" and put an empty card in the recorder. **If you have back-to-back interviews, don't forget to double-check battery power and memory every time you begin.**

If using a Tascam:

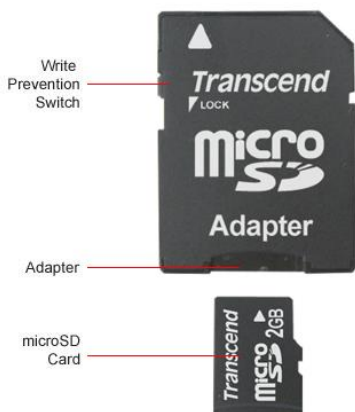
1. Turn on by pressing and holding the HOME button just below the screen. The screen should light up once you hold the button for a couple of seconds.
2. Check that the recorder has sufficient battery power. This is displayed in the top-right corner of the screen. If the battery shows two or three bars, you're fine. If it shows one or none, change batteries before beginning.
3. Press the RECORD button **once**. A red light above the screen should start blinking.
4. Check that the recorder has sufficient memory for the interview. Once the light above the screen is blinking, the remaining recording time will be displayed in 00:00:00 (HOURS:MINUTES:SECONDS) format on the right side of the screen. It's what is labeled (11) in the following diagram. The sample reading in the diagram means the recorder has a little more than 3 hours and 22 minutes of available space. Make sure there's enough available time for your interview. If there is not enough remaining time, turn off the recorder and remove the micro SD card underneath the cover labeled "micro SD" on the right side of the recorder. Place the card in the container that's labeled "Full SD Cards" (located on the table with the other interview equipment) and insert a new one from the container labeled "Empty SD Cards." Return to step 1.



5. Place the recorder on a flat surface between you and your interviewee. Position it so one of the stereo microphones at the top of the recorder is pointed at you and the other is pointed at your interviewee.
6. Confirm that the recorder is picking up the voices of you and your interviewee: First, make sure the recording level meters—(7) in the diagram—are peaking at around 75% to 100% of their display range when you and your interviewee are speaking at regular volume. Second, plug a pair of headphones into the jack on the recorder and do a manual listen, using the headphones to check that you can hear both of your voices getting picked up by the recorder.
7. Once you are ready to begin the interview, press record a second time. The light above the screen should stop blinking and just stay on, and the timer labeled (10) in the diagram above should begin counting. **Make sure the light above the screen is a solid, non-blinking red before you begin.**

If using the Zoom:

1. Turn on by sliding the switch on the left side of the recorder toward the power symbol (this is the switch with the other end labeled “HOLD”). The screen should light up once you hold the switch for a second.
2. Check that the recorder has sufficient battery power. This is displayed in the top-right corner of the screen. If the battery shows two or three bars, you’re fine. If it shows one or none, change batteries before beginning.
3. Check that the recorder has sufficient memory for the interview. Available recording time will be displayed in 00:00:00 (that’s HOURS:MINUTES:SECONDS) format in the



bottom-right corner of the screen. Make sure there’s enough time remaining for your interview. If there is not enough remaining time, turn off the recorder and remove the micro SD card. That card is located underneath the cover labeled “SD Card” on the right side of the recorder. Remove it by opening that cover and pushing gently on the card inside. It should eject slightly, allowing you to remove it. Remove the small micro SD card (see image to the left) from the SD adapter. Place the micro SD card in the available container (on the table with other interview equipment) that’s labeled “Full SD Cards” and insert a new one from the container labeled “Empty SD Cards” into the adapter. Return to step 1.

4. Press the button labeled “REC” **once**. A red circle around the button the screen should start blinking.
5. Place the recorder on a flat surface between you and your interviewee. Position it so one of the stereo microphones at the top of the recorder is pointed at you and the other is pointed at your interviewee.
6. Confirm that the recorder is picking up the voices of you and your interviewee: First, make sure the recording level meters in the middle of the screen are peaking at around 75% to 100% of their display range when you and your interviewee are speaking at regular volume. Second, plug a pair of headphones into the jack on the recorder and do a manual listen, using the headphones to check that you can hear both of your voices getting picked up by the recorder.
7. Once you are ready to begin the interview, press REC a second time. The light around the button should stop blinking and just stay on, and the timer at the top of the screen should begin counting. **Make sure the circle around the REC button is a solid, non-blinking red before you begin.**

## Template Questions

Use the following questions as guidelines for the structure of these interviews. Please try to cover the topics these questions suggest, but feel free to use your own judgment when it comes to follow-up questions and improvised questions based on your interviewee's responses. Remember the following: (1) As an oral historian, your task is to get your interviewee talking, not to play a central role in what's happening. Please try to keep interjections and your own commentary to a minimum. Asking questions is your top priority. (2) Try to avoid leading questions and yes-or-no questions. However, if your interviewee does respond to a question with a simple "yes" or "no," that's fine. Just try to ask more open-ended questions to prompt them to elaborate. (3) Silence is okay. Don't feel you need to jump in right when your interviewee seems to be finished with an answer. Sometimes taking a beat can lead them to elaborate. (4) Keep the clock in mind. Please wrap things up in a timely fashion, both out of respect for your interviewee's time and so that recording equipment is available for subsequent interviewers.

### Sample Questions:

1. When did you first join RSA?
2. How did you first learn about the organization?
3. How would you describe the organization when you first joined it?
4. Who are some of the key people you remember meeting or working with during your early years as part of RSA?
5. What was RSA doing when you first joined? What were its major projects and goals?
6. What are your most important or prominent memories related to RSA?
7. How has the organization changed throughout the time you've been part of it?
8. How do you think RSA will change in the years to come?
9. What are your hopes for the organization's future?

