



# CHECKLIST TO BECOME A GO-TO Media **EXPERT**



Hi, My name is Paula Rizzo and I'm an Emmy Award winning television producer in New York City. I've booked thousands of guests throughout my career just like you. And you know what they all had in common? They all knew how to play the media game and be a resource again and again.

**Paula Rizzo**  
media strategist

Wouldn't it be nice to have network producers and magazine editors call you first when they need an expert for a story? It can happen if you know what the media needs and you're able to deliver it. Lucky for you I've spent nearly 20 years working in television and I can give you the inside scoop.

Don't worry - it's something you can learn. I'm going to tell you how to keep the media interested in you and how to get your message out there in a bigger way. I know what makes producers smile and what makes them cringe and ban experts forever too.



## BE A MINDREADER

You don't have to get out a crystal ball to figure out what the media is looking for. All you have to do is know what they need. The way you do that is by watching the shows and by reading the magazines. Pick whatever outlet you're looking to pitch and become an expert on it. I had a client once tell me that she wanted to be on her local TV news stations but that she never watched them. I asked what kind of stories they covered in the morning and she couldn't tell me. You better believe her first assignment was to watch those shows. This is your inside guide because you'll see what kind of stories they cover and also get a sense of who their audience is. You never want to pitch a show or publication the wrong demographic. The demographic is made up of who is watching.



### PRO TIP

**Watch the commercials on TV and check out the ads in magazines. Advertisers are paying lots of money to target the exact audience who is watching and reading. That's why you see so many male-enhancement drugs during football games - because guys are watching! This is important to know because you wouldn't want to pitch a back-to-school segment to an audience that has grown kids.**

## BE AVAILABLE

When the media calls, you answer. It's as simple as that. If you don't - you run the risk of being passed over for another expert who might be just as good.

And if that expert shows up he or she could become the producer's go-to instead of you! Don't let this happen to you. Producers and editors are on tight deadlines and sometimes whoever answers the phone first wins.



### PRO TIP

**Always answer your phone. This sounds obvious but I can't tell you how many experts pitch themselves and then disappear. Be on standby when there's a story in the news that your expertise can serve.**



## BE A SOUNDBITE MACHINE

The best experts are those who are clear, concise and can speak with non-jargon language. Part of your job in the media may be to breakdown complex ideas for the general public. You don't have to sound like you're the smartest person in the room (even though we know you might be!) I've helped many professionals through media training to be better at this.

It's also worth noting that just because you're a speaker or have lead workshops doesn't mean you're ready to give soundbites on television. It's not the same skill. On TV you might have 15 seconds to get your message across.



### PRO TIP

**Headline it! When I work one on one with clients I get them to take their big ideas and stick a headline on it. That way if you only get to say that one sentence headline when asked a question you're still giving massive value.**

## BE A RESOURCE

You're the media's eyes and ears on the ground of your expertise. Producers are counting on you to let them know about trends in your industry that they just wouldn't know about. You're the one with clients and seeing patients so you know more than anyone else about the day-to-day insights in your industry.

Come from a place of service and share what you know when it's appropriate. Also share other possible experts and stories that might work for a producer's show or editor's magazine. Some of my favorite experts sent me other great experts to feature. When you do this, you show a producer that your intention is to be helpful and not just to get yourself some airtime.



## PRO TIP

Create your own content. Why wait for the media to come to you when these days you can get your message out into the world in minutes. Create your own videos, blog posts or podcasts highlighting your expertise and the exciting things happening in your industry that the public needs to know about. Producers and editors are always looking for experts to feature - why not show them you're already spreading the word? I've worked with many experts to produce compelling videos and podcasts that get the media's attention.



## BE HUMAN

I can count on two hands the number of thank you cards I received from experts I'd booked throughout my long career. Yep I'm talking maybe 10 people. And you know what? I remember each and every one of the people who went out of their way to send me a gift or even just a note. Some of those people even became friends.

It's important to look at a producer or editor like a person. I know it sounds crazy but most people don't. Most people look at us as their gateway onto a show or onto the pages of a magazine and don't care.




## PRO TIP

Be the person who cares and finds out more about the producer's life and what she cares about.

I'll never forget when my book, **Listful Thinking: Using Lists to be More Productive, Highly Successful and Less Stressed** was published, a psychologist I was interviewing that day showed up for our segment with a copy of my book!





I hadn't even seen it yet. That was such an amazing moment and it was the first book I signed. I will never forget that and I never forgot that psychologist. He was great on camera as well and became my go-to source over and over again. See it's not bribery it's being a thoughtful person! That will win the day every time.

## LET'S TALK

Want to find out if you qualify for a media strategy session with me to get clarity on your next big step? If you want to create compelling pitches for the media, be trained to perform better on camera or produce network-worthy videos and podcasts. I can help!



**YES, let's Talk!**

## ABOUT PAULA RIZZO

A best-selling author and Emmy-award winning television producer for nearly 20 years, Paula has produced health, wellness, and lifestyle segments with a range of top experts, including JJ Virgin, Jillian Michaels, and Deepak Chopra. Today, she works with experts, authors, and entrepreneurs on how to position themselves for media (traditional as well as blogs and podcasts), build their lists, and engage customers and fans for their brands, books and businesses.

She's the founder of the productivity site [ListProducer.com](http://ListProducer.com) and best-selling author of *Listful Thinking: Using Lists to be More Productive, Highly Successful and Less Stressed*, which has been translated into 11 languages and was featured as one Oprah.com's "Self Help Books That Actually Help."

She's also the creator of *Lights Camera Expert* - an online course geared towards helping entrepreneurs, authors and experts get media attention. Her work has appeared in [MindBodyGreen.com](http://MindBodyGreen.com), [Entrepreneur.com](http://Entrepreneur.com) and [Thrive Global](http://Thrive Global).

A regular speaker, Paula presented the keynote address for New York Women in Communications, and has presented at MA Conference for Women, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO), American Society of Association Executives, and others.