

Going to the Olympics?

5 tips to improve your coverage

- **Preview interviews**

During events like the Olympics or election you won't have much access to the main protagonists so do as much preview interviews as you can before the event. You have plenty time for this. Also try to attend other events where they are going to perform. If you are covering sports, go to practices or training sessions as well. I usually try to find good stories from other countries and be in touch with athletes and coaches before the Games. In 2012, for example, I attended the Team USA Media Summit in Dallas to get access to athletes that I knew I wouldn't have any chance to talk to in London. In the Olympics, I had a good story on Kayla Harrison and sex abuse in sports, something that I wouldn't be able to put together during the Olympics. These preview conversations/events will help you to get information that other writers won't be able to get in the mixed zone.

- **Contacts**

Friends, relatives, coaches, managers, many people around the main characters of an event can be great sources during the coverage. A casual chat with an athlete's friend can yield great information, something that other writers won't have.

- **Where am I going?**

Many planned events happen far from home. If you are going to travel to another country or city, it is very important to do a research about the place you are going. How do people live there? What you can learn about their culture and society? How is the economy going? What kind of sports they like (if you are covering a sports event)? These information can help you to get great stories about the place you are going and also to understand and analyze better things that will happen during the coverage.

- **Time and transportation**

Especially if you are covering a sports event, it is important to plan your steps. The events are spread out over the entire city and many of them happen almost at the same time. Before you start to get lost and losing precious time, it is important to know where you'll have to go and how to do this. How about the traffic? And transportation? Are there places that you should avoid? In Rio, for example, there are

some areas where you shouldn't go by yourself or without somebody that know the place. Arriving with this information in mind you will be able to work better and avoid stress.

- **Plan your agenda**

As soon as you know you are going to cover an event, start planning your agenda. Ask your bosses about what events you are going to cover and what kind of stories/characters they are interested in. Try to be organized and plan everything you are going to do every day. What time are the events you will have to watch? How much time you will need to write down the stories and do other stuff like social media, videos etc? When are you going to eat? And sleep? In events like this it is very easy to forget about this basic stuff. Of course there will be surprises and changes on the way, but it will be easier to work on this if you already have a good plan.

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