



SpeakerNet News

P R E S E N T S

How to Get on “Oprah” and Other Talk Shows

A teleseminar with Laurie Fried

Interviewed by Rebecca Morgan, CSP, CMC

Contents of this report:

- Synopsis of the teleseminar from the SpeakerNet News Web site, with an overview of the program contents and background information for Laurie Fried.
- Edited transcript of the teleseminar interview. The verbatim transcript has been edited to improve readability and to provide a list of additional resources.

SpeakerNet News

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How to Get on “Oprah” and Other Talk Shows with Laurie Fried

Laurie will share the truth behind getting on talk shows. She knows what works from her eight years as an Oprah Winfrey Show producer, as well as what current talk show producers want. You’ll learn the true secrets behind talk shows.

By attending this seminar, you will learn:

- How to target your pitch to what each show’s producers want.
- What turns off and annoys producers.
- How you can make yourself irresistible to talk shows.
- What talk shows are looking for—and what they aren’t!
- Simple things you *must* do before calling a producer.

About Laurie Fried:

Laurie Fried began her television career at a local show, called The Oprah Winfrey Show. No one imagined when this Chicago morning show was nationally syndicated, it would become a part of television history. When Harpo, (Oprah’s production company) was founded, Fried was one of the first members. At Harpo, she worked her way up from receptionist to Director of Marketing and Promotion, and she performed every job in between. During her eight-year tenure with the Emmy Award-winning talk show, Fried received a wealth of experience and worked in almost every facet of the business including production, promotion and publicity. She won a myriad of honors for her promotion and graphic work, including the prestigious PROMAX Gold Medallions, the Monitor and Telly Awards.

When Fried started as Director of Creative Services for The Jerry Springer Show, the topics were serious and the show was about to be canceled. When she told people she worked for The Jerry Springer Show, they would reply, “Jerry who?” Now, Jerry Springer is a household name. However, Fried does not take all the credit. “The nudity and fighting might have helped, just a bit.” Fried also helped launch the “Too Hot for TV” video series, which sold more than a million copies in less than a year.

Fried has booked television appearances on a wide spectrum of shows including The View with Barbara Walters, Home and Garden Television, The Sally Jessy Raphael Show, The Rosie O'Donnell Show, The Montel Williams Show, MTV's WebRIOT, Real World and Road Rules, CNN, CNNfn, CNBC, MSNBC, Good Morning America, The Today Show, CBS, NBC, ABC, and Fox News (national and local) as well as E! News Daily, Wheel of Fortune, Entertainment Tonight and Access Hollywood.

In 1998, Fried launched her own promotion and publicity firm, Laurie Fried & Associates, which specializes in garnering publicity for Internet web sites. Representing some of the fastest growing companies on the net, LFA-PR creates a spectrum of innovative promotions and appearances on television and radio.

SpeakerNet News Teleseminar
“How to Get on ‘Oprah’ and Other Talk Shows”
with Laurie Fried
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REBECCA: I met Laurie Fried a few years ago. I call her a hidden treasure because not many people know of her yet. But after today you will be sharing her attributes with every colleague you know as I often do. She began her television career at a small little local show called “AM Chicago,” which was renamed within a year as “The Oprah Winfrey Show.” No one imagined at that time that “Oprah” would be nationally syndicated and would become a part of television history.

When Oprah founded her company, called Harpo, Laurie was one of the first to work for her. She worked her way up from receptionist to Director of Marketing and Promotion and she performed every job in between. Spending eight years with the award-winning talk show, she received a wealth of experience and worked in almost every facet of the business including production, promotion and publicity.

In 1998 Laurie launched her own promotion and publicity firm which creates a spectrum of innovative promotions and appearances on television and radio. She is here today to share with us as much of her knowledge and wisdom as she can possibly cram in the next hour.

Laurie, how does someone become a guest expert on the Oprah show or other talk shows?

LAURIE: I was at a conference and the great publicist Arielle Ford said that whenever someone asked her “How do you become an expert on the Oprah show?” she said “Call the prayer line and pray.” Oprah is a very difficult show to

get on and I know I was supposed to have sure wisdom but I don't. The most important thing is to watch the show, watch the show, watch the show.

I have had numerous people who do cooking and they want to get on the Oprah show. I say, "Oprah does not do cooking." They say "But she had her chef on, and I think this would be perfect." I don't want to waste your money—Oprah doesn't do cooking. If you were *her* chef you could get on the show but otherwise she doesn't do cooking! So the key thing is to watch the show. You need to know yourself and know what the audience is for the show.

Most of the viewers of talk shows are women, with an average of an eighth grade education, which is somewhat surprising. You don't want to use a lot of jargon when you are pitching yourself for these shows. You want to make sure what you are pitching is appropriate for the audience. A friend of mine had a book on dealing with anger in the workplace. She wanted me to get her on the show. I said, "The people who watch Oprah are women at home. Anger in the workplace is not going to apply to them."

Again, sometimes someone has seen a show that related to that. But overall they try to develop shows that interest their demographic. Most importantly, know the show, know what you are talking about, know the audience and the key is to realistically assess yourself. If you have never done a national show before, if you have never done television before, Oprah is not the place to start.

REBECCA: Good advice. Should people watch weeks of shows? Or how many of the target shows do you think they should watch?