

Media interview tips

- Think before you speak.
- Know your facts. Always tell the truth. If you don't know the answer, say so.
- You aren't required to share all of the information you know, only what's asked.
- Think about the messages you wish to convey. Stay on message.
- Smile. Be open, warm and positive. Attitude, delivery and body language often mean more than the answer itself.
- Don't be defensive, but be happy to answer their questions. Vent later.
- Look directly at the reporter, not the camera. Even if there is no camera, always give the reporter your focused attention.
- Prior to asking questions, the reporter should always identify him/herself and the news organization he/she represents.
- Ask the reporter how much he/she knows about the topic. If unfamiliar with the topic, offer to provide background information. Reporters almost always will accept your offer to better inform their stories, and it helps you to frame the interview.
- It is OK to ask a reporter to repeat or rephrase a question. This ensures that you understand what the reporter is getting at, and it buys you some "think" time to formulate your response.
- If you don't know the answer, say so. It is better to decline to answer a question and offer to "find out and get back" to the reporter – or direct them to another source – than to give wrong or misleading information.
- Refuse to speculate. Stick to the facts that you know.
- Remember that reporters are people too. They have a job to do and anything you can do to help make the job easier and more pleasant is appreciated and helps build a relationship for the future.
- **Remember that if you're giving a presentation or speaking in a public forum, reporters may be in the audience and among those asking questions, and you may be quoted. See point number one.**

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