

Media Tip Sheet

I have a media request. What should I do?

Questions to ask	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell them you're unable to speak at the moment, but you'll get back to them very shortly. Avoid feeling rushed to provide a response. <p>Ask them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why are they calling? - What's their deadline? - Are they looking for a live interview or something pre-taped? - Who else will they speak to? - What's their angle (direction the interview will head)?
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Preparing key messages:

Know your Audience	Right-leaning Conservative media source? Left-leaning Liberal media source?
Requirements for a successful media interaction	<p>You need to satisfy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - So what? - Who cares? - What's in it for me? - Is this new?
Key Messages	<p>Rule of three:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key messages should consist of 1 to 3 sentences (key ideas). - Each key idea should be no more than 18 -27 words. - A 27-word key message takes about 9 seconds to speak. - Put the most important information up front. - Craft your key messages for a grade 7 level of understanding - Use the active voice. - Use a metaphor, simile, or analogy to explain difficult concepts. - Insert our name into your key messages.
Sample questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell me about your discovery / announcement / opportunity / facility? - Is this new / unique / one-of-a-kind? - How does it work? - Who stands to benefit from this? - Why does it matter? - How much does it cost? - Where will you go from here? - What's next?

The interview

Bridging technique	Use a bridging technique to get out of a tight spot or to get back to your key messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “That’s an interesting question, but what’s important for your viewers (listeners, readers) to know is...” - That’s one way of looking at it, but we believe there is a stronger argument, which says...”
Getting back on track	To get to a point – or get yourself back to your key messages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The vital point in all of this is...” - “What we’re really talking about here is...”
No jargon or acronyms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don’t use jargons, industry insider buzzwords, or acronyms. They are meaningless to the media.
Never affirm the negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don’t answer a negative question with a negative response. - Don’t use the reporter’s words. - Always answer with affirmation and positivity.
Beware of the pregnant pause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporters will often use this technique to create an awkward silence during an interview. - Our natural inclination is to fill that void – but don’t! - Answer the question and then stop talking.
Consider your setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider suggesting an appropriate setting (lab, industrial, business...) that matches the content of your interview.
What to wear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wear solid colors. Dark solid colors are best. - Do not wear a busy pattern, it confuses the camera.
Tips and techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nothing is ever “off-the-record.” - If you don’t know the answer to a question – say so and commit to getting back to them with an answer. - Do not make up facts or generalized statistics. - Do not argue with the reporter. Use a bridging technique. - Be sincere. Don’t try to spin the message. Reporters are truth-seekers. - Keep your hands at your navel level. - Keep your shoulders up and your head straight forward. You’ll appear more engaged in the interview. - Pace yourself. Your tendency will be to rush because you are nervous.
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare, practice, and rehearse.