



Media Training

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Workshop Overview

1. Discuss the Requirements of an Effective Media Interview
2. Practice Interviews with Videotape and Evaluation
3. Discover the "Dos" and "Don'ts" of Media Interviews
4. Develop Confidence and Conviction with Interviewers
5. Review Skills Learned in the Workshop
6. Questions and Discussion

Guidelines for Media Interviews

1. Be very well prepared. Know what you want to say, and how you want to say it.
2. What is your desired outcome for your remarks? How do you want to see them in print?
3. Know what you ***don't*** want to say. Stay on message.
4. Have supplementary material available; you may have to refer to it.
5. Convey confidence, but not over-confidence.
6. If you are seated for the interview, sit upright and keep your feet firmly planted. Cross your ankles.
7. If you are standing for the interview, plant your feet and don't sway or shuffle.
8. Make connected eye contact with your interviewer.
9. Speak slowly and clearly. Breathe deeply through your nose if emotions take over.
10. Use your hands to add emphasis.
11. Smile! Be passionate.
12. Be charming, even if the interviewer is not.
13. Speak in layperson's terms. Tell stories. Keep to the point of the story.
14. Translate acronyms.
15. Be an authority – because you are!
16. Decide to enjoy the interview.
17. There is no "off the record." Ever!

Do's & Don'ts for Media Interviews

DO'S:

1. Think about your audience. You are (ultimately) speaking to them.
2. Keep your focus on key message points.
 - My [INSERT SON/DAUGHTER] contracted meningococcal disease, a devastating bacterial infection, and [INSERT PERSONAL STORY].
 - Adolescents and college students are at increased risk for contracting meningococcal disease; however, the majority of cases among this age group are potentially vaccine-preventable.
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends immunization for all adolescents 11 through 18 years of age, and college freshmen living in dormitories.
 - Visit www.nmaus.org for more information.
3. Answer the question first, and then provide the explanation.
4. Communicate your message clearly. Hear yourself when you speak.
5. Give proof to each statement, and include benefits. **For example:** "Immunization is important because adolescents and young adults are at increased risk for the disease due to certain lifestyle factors common among this age group such as, crowded living conditions, moving to a new residence or attending a new school with students from geographically diverse areas, going to bars, active or passive cigarette smoking, and irregular sleeping patterns."
6. If the interviewer tries to take you off message, come back to the key message points you want to deliver. In other words, answer the question you wish the interviewer had asked.
7. It is helpful to use some of the actual words of a question to begin your answer. **For example:** Q: "How is the disease spread?" A: "The disease is spread through..."
8. Use signal phrases:
 - "what's important to remember is..."
 - "the real statistics are..."
 - "what your (audience) wants to know is..."
9. Always look for the bridge from the interviewer's question to the answer that you and NMA want to give.

Be yourself. Be engaging. Be confident. Be a resource and be memorable.

DON'TS:

1. Don't go off the record. Ever.
2. Mention or bad-mouth incorrect articles or representations. (Correct perceptions where necessary.)
3. Speak for other people. Speak only for yourself and your experience.
4. Get into politics or medical issues.
5. Make visionary guesses or statements. They can come back to you!
6. Be pushed anywhere emotionally you don't want to go.
7. Repeat a negative. **For example:** Q: "I've heard that NMA is really biased in its representations." A: "NMA is a very important, well-established organization..."
8. Be long-winded. Short, succinct sound bites read and sound better. Let the interviewer work for information from you.
9. Go off topic. Follow a point to its conclusion. You will be perceived as an authority.
10. Be concerned if you do become emotional. Breathe deeply, take a sip of water. The interviewer will wait.
11. Be downhearted. You are serving a vital purpose by teaching and guiding others.

Handling the Media

1. Media personnel are curious. It's their job to find the "angle" for a story. They will dig for it.
2. Stay focused on the message that you want to give. Keep the key message points in mind throughout the interview.
3. Build relationships with the media: they will give your story preference. Become a resource. Return phone calls.
4. Use positive language. If the interviewer becomes manipulative or negative, stay positive.
5. They are trained to take you off message. Stay on message.
6. Interviewees are discussed in newsrooms, especially if they are rude, negative or unfriendly. Be discussed with admiration.
7. Listen well to the questions. Read body language.
8. Speak in short, succinct sound bites. Less is more, and easier to capture.
9. Use descriptive language for print/radio interviews.
10. Smile, relax and enjoy!

THERE IS NO "OFF THE RECORD!"