

Interviewing Tips

Here are some handy tips to help you prepare for an interview with a reporter.

Preparing for an interview

- Develop your core messages by focusing on the key points that make a strong headline, sub headline and the main point of the story. By doing this, you can help craft how the story is written.
- Gather facts, statistics and background information.
- Practice getting your message across before the interview.
- Develop and rehearse answers to routine and difficult questions.
- For cameras, avoid wearing white or black. White is too harsh and will be glaringly bright on camera and black is too dark and may cause you to blend into the background. Also stay away from flashy jewelry and stripes.
- Contact the Office of University Relations, 419-434-4520, if you need assistance.

During the interview

- Tell the truth.
- State important facts first.
- Make your point and get to it quickly.
- Avoid complex explanations.
- Speak to the reporter, not the camera.
- Don't fake it. If you don't know the answer to a question, admit it and say you will contact the reporter as soon as you get the answer.
- Avoid risky remarks. Don't use comments that can be misinterpreted by a reporter or editor – such as off-color jokes or sarcasm.
- Know when to stop talking.
- Never say “no comment.” You appear guilty, untrustworthy and evasive. You want to leave the reporter with the impression of being open, honest and accessible.

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