



## HOW TO HANDLE THE MEDIA GIVING AN INTERVIEW

### Before

- Why does the interviewer want to interview you?
- How much do they know about the subject?
- What more do they want to find out?
- Who else might he or she be interviewing?
- Find out all you can about the publication or programme they are working for

Journalists generally work at great speed and under intense pressure. They have to find an angle that will attract the reader. If you can help them do that and remain true to your subject, you've got a much better chance of being asked back.

- Prepare some notes on the subject you will be talking about.
- If a journalist comes on the phone for an immediate quote promise to call back – take a few minutes to prepare.
- Call back as soon as possible as new stories always crop up and you could be forgotten.
- Your audience will remember only two or three points.
- Identify the issues and subjects that will appeal most to the audience.
- Remember that less is more in this case

### During

Remember the acronym ACT

- Act Confident - You know your subject better than the journalist.
- Conversational and clear style - Establish no more than three key messages and illustrate your points with examples for colour and credibility. Avoid jargon.
- Take charge of the interview. Preparation is the key.
- Acknowledge and address the question e.g. yes, no, I don't know, I'm not able to answer that..
- Bridge e.g. but, however, what I can say is, I want to be clear about this
- Control and clarity e.g. key messages from your interview brief
- Give examples - worth a thousand words. People love stories so identify a graphic example or anecdote to back up every assertion.
- Use analogies - relate terms to everyday things such as driving a car or asking someone to climb a tree blindfolded

- People love to learn things so give some information or advice - a few tips on how to get the best out of something or to avoid disaster.

### **Think ahead - questions**

Body language – Bottom in the back of the chair, lean forward, use your hands to communicate but do not overdo it.

### **Don't discuss**

It will make you sound too accommodating

### **Don't defend**

State your point but avoid being defensive

### **Don't debate**

This lowers yourself and your organisation. The exception to this is a panel debate.

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