

## **INTERVIEWING ORIENTATION**

### ***The Do's and Don'ts of Interviews***

1. If possible, study the media in advance. Review the latest issues.
2. Ask questions before you start.
  - clarify subject and depth; clarify your expectations with the media
  - learn who the reporter has spoken with or intends to speak with
3. Anticipate difficult questions; rehearse the answers.  
  
Don't hesitate to have talking points and messages written on note cards to help you stay on-purpose
4. Beware of manipulative or tricky questions like . . .
  - "would you say then that ..."
  - "what if ...."
5. Discuss with your family in advance!
6. Remember that you are the authority, the expert.
7. Be brief and to the point.
  - stress key messages/sound bytes
  - bridge back to these messages as often as possible
  - avoid information overload
  - avoid saying negative phrases or questions
8. Remember that you have rights too.
  - to express your point of view
  - to correct wrong information
  - "That is an area I do not wish to discuss" is always appropriate, but avoid saying "no comment"!
  - Never go off the record; do not assume confidentiality
9. Be respectful!
  - This is not the arena to praise or bash any individual or institution
  - There is a time for being angry; be careful in this arena
10. Never lie or "wing it".
  - If there is something you don't understand, say so
  - Check your ego at the front door
11. Do not lose site of your objectives and messages.

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