

TOP 10 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEDIA INTERVIEW

Interviews are good opportunities to speak directly to your audience and establish credibility. Here are our top 10 tips for getting media ready and raising your chances of landing the story.

- 1 Be on time.** If you're meeting the interviewer in person, show up a few minutes early so you have time to gather your thoughts. It also shows that you made the meeting a priority and value their time.
- 2 Be in the know.** Prior to your interview, check the news for the latest industry developments as well as current events. You may be asked for your perspective on timely stories.
- 3 Prepare your messaging.** Plan what your key messages are ahead of time. If the conversation starts to go off track, bring it back to your main points.
- 4 Be yourself.** It's smart to prepare talking points, but don't recite them verbatim or you'll risk sounding like a press release. Stay on message, but sprinkle in your own anecdotes. Let your genuine personality shine through.
- 5 Remember to smile.** Even through the phone, smiling makes you sound approachable and engaging. It also demonstrates that you're happy to be interacting with the interviewer.
- 6 Follow up with more information.** Close the loop on outstanding items so the interviewer has everything they need for their story. If you know of additional data that supports your topic, offer to share more information post interview. Most PR pros will tackle this for you but if you're not certain they will, be sure to clarify who is doing the follow up outreach.
- 7 Stick to the point.** Avoid unrelated tangents or long-winded answers. It's better to be concise. The interviewer will likely ask follow-up questions if they want to dive deeper into a subject.
- 8 Maintain eye contact.** It's a simple way to show that you are engaged, trustworthy and confident. If you're looking down or constantly darting your eyes away, you may come off as unprepared and dishonest.
- 9 Tune out distractions.** Silence your phone and put it away if you're meeting the interviewer in person. If you're speaking to them via phone, close the door and avoid looking at emails. You don't want to be enticed by alerts and notifications in the background.
- 10 Anticipate difficult questions.** Think about what you might get asked (especially questions you don't want to answer) and how you would respond. Remember that it's okay to let the interviewer know you'd like to give something more thought and come back to it later in the interview.

Do you need help getting media ready? Contact Chris Cherry, Chief Engagement Officer at ccherry@jconnelly.com or 973-850-7329.