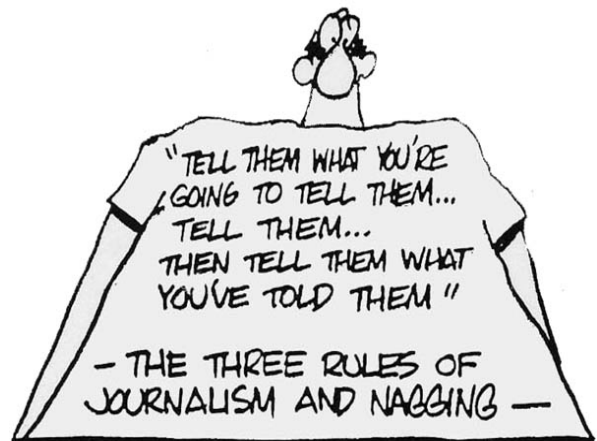


INTERVIEW PREPARATION GUIDE FOR SPOKESPERSONS

1. **THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO: Select your primary message.** Have no more than two (three at the very most) main points that you want to make. Write them down so they are etched in your memory.
2. **EQUALLY IMPORTANT: Select examples that illustrate your messages.** Use examples of real people in real life situations that the audience will relate to. (e.g. "A little 10-year-old girl who had great success with this procedure....")
3. **Emphasize your main points.** Reporters and consumers won't know what's important unless you tell them *"This is very important."* *"Let me emphasize this point."* *"If there's one thing I think people should remember it is..."*. The more often you make your point, the better it will be remembered.
4. **Think: What are the questions likely to be asked?** Reporters will generally start by asking, "What is this all about?" and then want to know WHO, WHEN, WHERE, WHY and HOW. To get an idea what a reporter will ask, discuss your topic with a friend or neighbor who doesn't know much about the subject.
5. **Be short, simple – do not use jargon or big words.** Don't try to educate. There isn't time in most media stories, so keep it simple and brief. Talk on a middle school level.
6. **Treat the interview like a living room conversation.** Be yourself. Be personable. Smile. Interrupt. Tell stories. Do all the things you would do if you were conversing with a friend.
7. **Remember, there is no such thing as "off the record."** Do not say anything you do not want to see in print, online or hear on the air. Period.
8. **Watch how you say it.** Reporters look for the most colorful, interesting language so if you are glib, silly, outrageous, surprising, etc. you can expect that comment to be used. You can also work this to your advantage. Tuck your main message into something glib, silly, outrageous, surprising – or a story – and it will almost guarantee usage.



Mister Boffo by Joe Martin

9. **With newspaper and magazine interviews, slow down and know when to be silent.** Many print reporters take notes by hand and appreciate your speaking slowly and deliberately. Complete your thought and shhh until the pencil stops.
10. **On TV, keep eye contact with the speaker.** Forget about the camera and speak specifically to the person who asked you the question. If there are several of you on the show, look at the person who is talking (and nowhere else).
11. **On radio, speak into the microphone.** You need to speak directly into the radio studio microphone rather than swinging your head to look at another person.
12. **Don't let your wardrobe overshadow your words.** Look in the mirror and make sure your outfit will not distract from the important things you have to say. For TV, dress conservatively in plain (no prints) colors. Do not wear black, white or an all-red outfit. Avoid big jewelry and remove objects from your pockets so they lie flat. Don't wear half glasses or light-sensitive ones, and accept the offer of make-up, if it is made. Women should wear lipstick on TV and men should wear long socks.
13. **Watch nonverbal signals.** Eyes looking up, down and away look shifty and less informed. Nervous hands that play with jewelry or clutch each other (or the arms of a chair) look... nervous. If you are nodding your head to indicate, "I hear you" you are also telling the reporter and the TV audience, "I agree." Slouching back in your chair looks aloof, uncaring or defensive. Sitting forward shows you're interested and open to discussion.



Public Communications Inc.

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW – PREPARATION SHEET

Select a topic that you would like to talk about in an interview and fill in your main message below. Think in these terms: If the audience remembers only one thing I have to say, what do I want it to be? (Keep it short!)

Now, give an example that illustrates your message:

Can you prove your point with statistics, studies or facts? List them here:

“Never underestimate the intelligence of your audience and never overestimate their knowledge.”