

SPOKESPERSON TIPS

TAKE CONTROL OF THE STORY

Do the advance work: Find out who the reporter is, what outlet and their spin. Ask the reporter what their story is and who have they talked to? Correct their false assumptions with re-framing.

FRAME THE STORY

Tactics vs. Issue: Don't tell the media what you are doing. Tell them why. Make sure your sound byte frames the story.

Structure your story:

- 1 Problem
- 2 Solution
- 3 Action

Speak with the language of values.

NOT A CONVERSATION

Don't answer the question—respond! Get your message out regardless of what questions the reporter asks.

MESSAGE DISCIPLINE

Know your message and practice. Repeat your message. There is no “off the record.”

ABC:
A. CKNOWLEDGE THE QUESTION
B. BRIDGE BACK TO YOUR
C. ONTENT (THE MESSAGE)

Sample Bridges:

- “...I think the important issue”
- “...I think the real point is”
- “...I think the larger question is”
- “...the reason I'm here is”

BE QUOTABLE

Be a character in the story—establish your connection to the issue. Frequently the media asks name, age, profession (have a response). Sound bytes:
U.S. TV average: 5-13 seconds
U.S. print average: 5-25 words

THE TRUTH IS ON YOUR SIDE SO BE ACCURATE

It's okay to say “I don't know the answer to that” or “I'll get back to you on that.” Don't say “No comment.” It makes you look guilty.

Do not lie or make stuff up EVER!
Back up your arguments with facts.

DON'T DISTRACT FROM YOUR MESSAGE

Relax. If you can't, at least try to appear relaxed. Take deep breaths. Be polite but firm. Use accessible language.