



## Helpful Interview Tips

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**Be memorable.** Jargon and buzz words limit the audience's ability to understand what you are saying. Use simple, clear English and make what you are saying interesting for your audience.

**Use numbers sparingly, but use them.** Reporters make poor mathematicians so simply dumping a pile of numbers at the reporter's feet generally fails to make your point. Numbers that work are those that are presented in context and that support your key message.

**Everything is on the record.** Understand that anything you say in the presence of a reporter can be used in the story in some way. If you do not want something to be printed or broadcast, it is best to not say it.

**Avoid speculation.** Reporters love stories that talk about the "what if" as if it is fact. This detracts from your message and is likely to inaccurately represent you and your organization.

**Be consistent.** If a reporter asks you the same question several times make sure that your answer is the same. Never concede a point or change an answer simply to get a reporter to move to a different topic.

**Tell stories.** Reporters love stories, especially ones that are told in an interesting way and that include people. Technology may be really cool, but scientists develop it so that it benefits people in some way. Remember, **All journalism is about how events impact people.**

**Gesture in a natural way.** All people gesture when they speak, so make sure your hands are in a place that allows for natural gestures. Studies have shown that even people, blind since birth, gesture when they speak. It is a natural form of human expression and gestures can help raise your comfort level in the unnatural environment of the media interview.

**Practice.** Oral communication must be practiced. You must say out loud the words that you want to say before you meet the reporter. Where we think about speech and where we execute speech are two separate parts of your brain. Practice allows those two parts of the brain to sync up and allows for a better performance.

**Dress appropriately.** How formal you dress for an interview is best determined by the environment that you will be in. A live studio interview may require a suit. That same interview conducted in a laboratory might be better if you are in a lab coat. Simple solid colors work best.

**Speak up.** Energy matters so use plenty of it in an interview. Speak loudly and clearly because it's not just what you say, but how you say it that has an impact on your audience. Communicating with energy also helps limit anxiety and stage fright. You will be held accountable for what you say; you may as well say it like you mean it!

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