



# ADVOCATING EFFECTIVELY LEGISLATIVELY & HOW (*AND WHEN!*) TO TALK TO THE MEDIA

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ABOUT THE PRESENTER – HOLLY GERARD

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FOLLOWING A DECADE IN CORPORATE HEALTHCARE & MARKETING, FOUNDED TWO CONSULTING FIRMS TO MANAGE POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS AND ISSUE ADVOCACY – DEVELOPING A WINNING RECORD OF LOCAL TO PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL CAMPAIGN CONSULTING, AND DELIVERING COMPELLING MESSAGES AND TACTICAL INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR ADVOCACY PROJECTS.



MOM, COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER, SECRETARY FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE OKLAHOMA OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION, AND ASSIST WITH MESSAGING FOR THE OOA.



## THEN...

"...LET ME CONGRATULATE YOU ON THE CHOICE OF CALLING WHICH OFFERS A COMBINATION OF INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL INTERESTS FOUND IN NO OTHER PROFESSION." SIR WILLIAM OLSER (FATHER OF MODERN MEDICINE, 1849-1919)

"IN NOTHING DO MEN MORE NEARLY APPROACH THE GODS THAN IN GIVING HEALTH TO MEN." — CICERO (106 B.C. - 43 B.C.)

"OBSERVATION, REASON, HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, COURAGE; THESE MAKE THE PHYSICIAN." — MARTIN H. FISCHER (1879 -1962)

AND NOW... LAWMAKERS SIFT THROUGH

Activist Groups “Think-tanks” Experts  
Podcasts  
Lobbyists Home Internet researchers  
Online Blogs Video blogs Social media platforms  
Stakeholders Well meaning citizens  
Professional Policy Proponents

ALL OF WHOM SEEK TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATION & POLICY  
WHICH IMPACTS YOUR PROFESSION

LAST YEAR, LAWMAKERS WERE ASKED TO CONSIDER  
300 BILLS THAT IMPACTED YOUR PRACTICE:



Managed Care      Surprise Billing      Vaccines  
Regulatory Issues      Scope of Practice      Opioids  
Funding      Medicaid Expansion  
Telemedicine      And much, much more

AND MORE ARE COMING IN 2022



SO HOW DO YOU HELP THEM CUT THROUGH  
THE NOISE?

***Fundamental Facts***

- ✓ Lawmakers know you are busy
  - ✓ They respect you and your expertise
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# GET EQUIPPED TO ADVOCATE IN A FEW QUICK STEPS (AND ENLIST FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO HELP!)

## 4 STEPS TO GET IN THE KNOW:

- ✓ **SESSION RUNS FEBRUARY 7 – MAY, 2022**
- ✓ **MAKE SURE ARE SIGNED UP FOR TEXT ALERTS FOR IMPORTANT UPDATES**

**<https://ooa.memberclicks.net/ooa-text-alerts>**

- ✓ **HAVE A FRIENDS OR FAMILY MEMBERS JOIN FRIENDS OF THE OOA**

**<https://ooa.memberclicks.net/fooa>**

- ✓ **YOU HAVE ONE STATE REPRESENTATIVE & ONE STATE SENATOR REPRESENTING YOUR HOME AREA - THEY CAN BE KEY ALLIES – FIND THEIR CONTACT INFORMATION (the last two pictures):**

**<http://www.oklegislature.gov/findmylegislature.aspx>**

## ABOUT STEP #4 – DO YOU KNOW THEM?

\*\*\*DON'T ASSUME BECAUSE THEY KNOW YOU, THEY WILL SUPPORT YOUR VIEWPOINT. REACH OUT, DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP, POSITION YOURSELF AS AN ASSIST.



## ABOUT STEP #4 – IF YOU DON'T KNOW THEM BUT WANT TO INTERACT:

### Sample Email

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,  
I know there has been a lot happening on the healthcare front legislatively in our state as health care providers work to serve the health of our community through the pandemic and beyond. I appreciate the work you are doing at the Capitol on behalf of our community, and I would be very pleased to have an opportunity to meet for coffee to talk about what I'm seeing here in our community and discuss any issues surrounding healthcare that you may be researching or want to have information on as you prepare for session. Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ and I look forward to the opportunity to visit.  
Sincerely, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ Family Health Clinic

*Pro-Tip* - If you recognize them from a shared civic engagement group - mention it – it shows that a shared commitment for the community good!

## MEETING TIPS

- ✓ IT'S OK TO ARRANGE A SATURDAY COFFEE IN THE DISTRICT
- ✓ BE ON TIME – IF YOU ARE LATE CALL!
- ✓ DON'T JUMP TO ADVOCACY – ALLOW CONVERSATION TO PROGRESS
- ✓ BUILD BRIDGES NOT BARRIERS – DON'T CORRECT OR CUT OFF
- ✓ LISTEN – IT HELPS BOTH YOU AND THE LAWMAKER
- ✓ REASSURE THEM - YOU ARE THERE TO SUPPORT THE WELLBEING OF COMMUNITY
- ✓ BE HONEST - LEGISLATION CAN IMPACT YOUR COMMUNITY, PRACTICE & PROFESSION
- ✓ LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO EDUCATE
- ✓ OFFER TO PROVIDE MEDICAL STUDIES/RESOURCES AND FOLLOWUP DISCUSSION
- ✓ OFFER TO SERVE AS A “DOCTOR OF THE DAY” AT THE CAPITOL IF YOU CAN

## EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY FOR THE REST OF US...



TWO WAVES ARE NEEDED – THE PROACTIVE GROUP DISCUSSED ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDES, AND THE “IN THE CLUTCH” WAVE THAT CAN IMPACT LEGISLATION ALREADY HEADING THROUGH THE CHUTE...

### FEEDBACK FROM LAWMAKERS

- ✓ THEY WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU – THE EXPERT
- ✓ A CALL OR EMAIL FROM A PHYSICIAN OR STAFF MENTIONING PHYSICIAN CLINIC AFFILIATION IN THEIR DISTRICT ON AN ISSUE CARRIES WEIGHT
- ✓ MOST HEALTHCARE RELATED BILLS RECEIVED FEWER THAN 5 AND MANY ZERO PHYSICIAN CALLS.
- ✓ OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE DAY AT THE CAPITOL, AND ANYTIME “WHITE COATS” SHOW UP EN MASSE IS NOTICED AND IMPACTFUL.
- ✓ MANY HAVE EXTENDED CONVERSATIONS WITH THE “DOCTORS OF THE DAY”



# TOP FOUR WAYS A BUSY PHYSICIAN CAN GET LEGISLATIVE RESULTS

1. **KNOW WHO YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE AND STATE SENATOR ARE, AND POST OFFICIAL CONTACT INFO IN A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN 'CROWDSOURCE' SUPPORT (IN THE OFFICE, ON THE FRIDGE, STAFF AREA).**
2. **WHEN YOU OR YOUR STAFF RECEIVE AN ALERT FROM THE OOA/FOOA, CLICK THE BUTTON TO SUPPORT THEIR ADVOCACY EFFORT FOR YOU (MUCH OF THE INFO IS READY TO GO ON TO A LAWMAKER WITH A SIMPLE CLICK).**
3. **MAKE 3 PHONE CALLS WHEN DAMAGING LEGISLATION IS PENDING - YOUR 2 LAWMAKERS AND THE GOVERNOR** – ASSISTANTS ANSWER THE PHONE AT THE CAPITOL AND MARK DOWN SUPPORT/NONSUPPORT TO TALLY HASH MARK "VOTES" – MANY TIMES IT TAKES 30 SECONDS TO WEIGH IN.
4. **PLAN TO BE AT THE CAPITOL FOR OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE DAY** – DEDICATING ONE DAY CAN CHANGE A MYRIAD OF LEGISLATION OUTCOMES.



Now more than ever, physicians can reposition themselves as the experts in the field, who can still be trusted to “first do no harm.”

It begins with legislative outreach to cut through the voices of other influencers and ideologies, by being the steady hand of trusted experience, an honest resource, and a partner in health outcomes for a community’s future.



The next step is cutting through the noise of the “breaking and not quite news” headlines and “soundbite sensationalism” – with a similar approach.

# THE BASICS – MEDIA TYPES AND WHAT BENEFITS YOU AND YOUR PRACTICE?

## **BEST MEDIA IS CONTROLLED MESSAGE MEDIA**

**HOMETOWN PAPER/MAGAZINE** - “HEALTH MATTERS” COLUMNS, PARTICIPATING IN A COMMUNITY HEALTH EVENT THAT IS ADVERTISED OR WRITTEN ABOUT OR HIGHLIGHTING A STAFF MEMBER CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY ETC. THIS MEDIA GROWS YOUR REACH AND BUILDS GOODWILL.

**RADIO/PODCAST** – LESS CONTROLLED BUT CAN BE PRE-RECORDED, CAN BE USED TO HIGHLIGHT SERVICES OF YOUR PRACTICE, ANSWER COMMUNITY QUESTIONS, AND “ASK THE EXPERT” PROGRAMS TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR EXPERTISE.

# THE BASICS – MEDIA TYPES AND WHAT BENEFITS YOU AND YOUR PRACTICE?

LOCAL NEWS – BROADER REACH, MORE POTENTIAL FOR PITFALLS

SOCIAL MEDIA/ONLINE VIDEOS/BROADCAST TV– “VIRAL”

REACH POTENTIAL, IS VERY ACCESSIBLE TO BOTH HONEST (AND DISHONEST) BROKERS OF INFORMATION.

# TIPS FOR SUCCESS – WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Standard Op Eds are limited typically to 500 words (check with the publication)  
Letters to the Editor typically are limited to 250 words.

- ✓ Stay away from controversial subjects if possible
- ✓ Choose a topic to appeal to the broadest audience
- ✓ Keep it Simple – Can a 6<sup>th</sup> grader understand your point and process?
- ✓ State with your point, support with 2-3 facts or ‘points to ponder’
- ✓ Give an action step to encourage change needed
- ✓ Short close restating the point you are making.

LET OTHERS YOU TRUST READ YOUR SUBMISSION – You may be amazed the take-aways others have when they apply their personal perspective to your presentation.



# POSITIVE PRESS - SO YOU'VE GOTTEN A CALL FROM THE MEDIA FOR A QUOTE ON A STORY...

**BEFORE YOU AGREE – RECOGNIZE THAT THE MEDIA IS NOT YOUR FRIEND.**

## **YOUR PRIORITY**

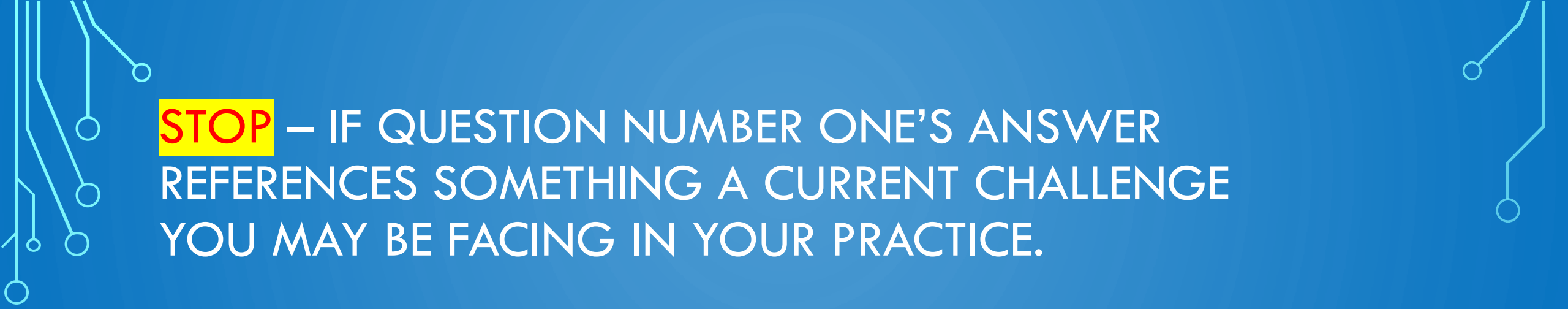
- Positive Increase in Name ID & Reach
- Trusted Resource for the Community
- Inform the Audience
- Help People Achieve Better Health
- Be Seen as Competent and Professional

## **MEDIA'S PRIORITY**

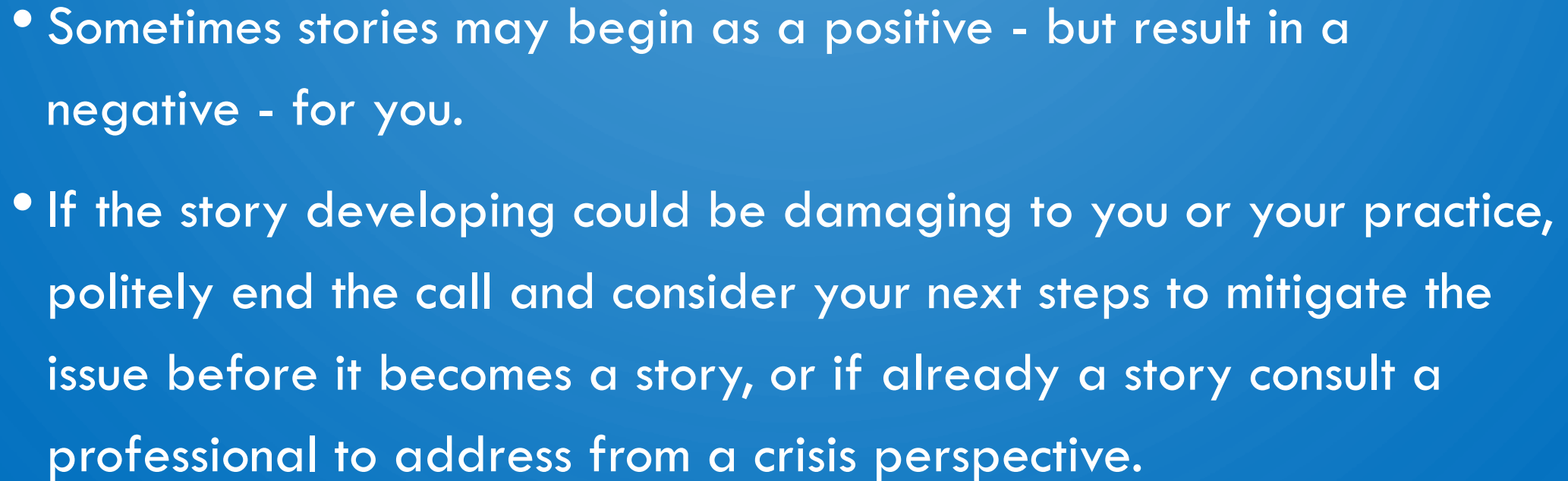
- Increase in their Reach and Market Segment
- Incorporate Anyone – not necessarily you – who can provide backup to the story they are developing (not your story)
- Capitalize on any ability to spread the story across multiple platforms (more revenue)
- Provide a news 'fix' in a 1-3 minute package


# I'M TEMPTED STILL TO PARTICIPATE – THEN KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- There is no rule that you need to instantly give a quote, appear on live zoom or radio show – it is rare (unless you are getting a call at 4:30 for a 5pm news segment) that you must instantly decide.
- DO return the call, or ask an associate to return the call, to find out more.
- You CAN (and should) ask questions to be prepared to frame answers:
  - ✓ Can you tell me what topic you'd like to report on?
  - ✓ When will this air and what is your deadline?
  - ✓ What would you like as the main takeaway from the story?
  - ✓ What points are most interested in me speaking about?
  - ✓ Can you provide me with the question you will ask me?



**STOP** – IF QUESTION NUMBER ONE’S ANSWER REFERENCES SOMETHING A CURRENT CHALLENGE YOU MAY BE FACING IN YOUR PRACTICE.

- Sometimes stories may begin as a positive - but result in a negative - for you.
  - If the story developing could be damaging to you or your practice, politely end the call and consider your next steps to mitigate the issue before it becomes a story, or if already a story consult a professional to address from a crisis perspective.
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# MOST STORIES DO FOLLOW THE TOPLINE INTERESTS OF THE PUBLIC

The Pandemic and related health issues/lifestyle/wellness issues continue to dominate the headlines.

Doctors have the opportunity to fill a needed gap in providing reasoned, intelligent, actionable tips and information to the public.



# RULE OF THUMB – ONLY PARTICIPATE IF YOU CAN PREPARE

PREP - Think and Write BEFORE you Speak

Review – Revise – Condense – DON'T OVER SPEAK –  
Remember your soundbite for an entire story is typically going to be from 5 to 20 seconds.

Prepare for one main question and 2 follow-up for a news package

# HOW YOU LOOK IS (ALMOST) AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT AND HOW YOU SAY IT

## Dress for Success

Wear a blazer/professional top/stethoscope or white coat

Choose a solid color professional shirt – light blue is typically a good color for cameras – do not pick busy patterns or colors that can distort the camera feed.

Make sure your hair is brushed, and your presentation is natural and nothing is detracting from your presentation – look in the mirror and grin showing your teeth!

# FIRST IMPRESSION IS (ALMOST) AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT AND HOW YOU SAY IT

## **Present Yourself for Success – Confident & Competent**

Shoulders Back, Sit up Straight, Don't fold arms, Sit Appropriately

SMILE – feel it all the way up to your eyes!

Have a glass of water and have a cough drop

Practice saying what you plan to say on camera to the mirror – project your voice (but don't yell), slow down and enunciate.

## FOLLOW UP QUESTION CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE

**Condense your first statement to lead to the desired follow-up.**

Example: "As a front-line physician who has cared for hundreds of our neighbors seeking treatment for symptoms of COVID19 – we are seeing success with a combination of treatments including \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, along with healthy choices that can be made to help bolster your bodies' overall health and ability to recover."

Leads to the followup – "What choices would you recommend?"



## IF THE FOLLOW UP QUESTION IS NEGATIVE OR DOESN'T ADVANCE THE STORY TO ASSIST THE AUDIENCE

**“What about a blogger that says \_\_\_\_\_ is a good medicine.”**

Don't Take the Bait/DO Reframe the Question. The Audience is who you are trying to inform, not the interviewer. Answer the question and give the answer you know is accurate – and tell the truth.

Example: “I think the biggest question on viewer's minds is what is showing as the most effective treatment protocols. Research is showing, and I am seeing personally that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (restate your first statement content) are recommended by medical experts as effective – and we want our families to have access to what gives them the best chance at a healthy life moving forward. I'd also recommend good lifestyle choices – healthy diet, exercise, to help boost your overall health and ability to recover quickly.”

## THE INTERVIEW CLOSE

If possible – offer a trusted link resource for the public to visit for Frequently Asked Questions concerning the topic – this points the audience to the right sources for their at-home internet research.

Thank the Interviewer to bringing an important topic forward to the public. Many reporters will include that snippet or at least b-roll (no sound) of a friendly interaction while the reporter gives the narrative voiceover of the story.

## P.S. A QUICK WORD ABOUT A CLINIC/OFFICE VIDEO SHOOT

Clean Desk, no patient information visible.

No items out that can become a story – that inside joke picture on a back wall can - and will be noticed.

Ensure that staff is ok with being filmed if that is requested. Do not allow filming of patients unless they agree specifically with the interviewer to speak.

Usually the outside sign for the clinic is utilized to provide additional footage and context.

## AFTER THE CAMERA STOPS ROLLING

Ensure they have your proper name and spelling.

If you do not have their full contact information, ask for their card.

Followup after the meeting with an quick email thanking them for the opportunity.

If the interview is great – share on your social media!

# TAKEAWAYS

Use the Media to Reach the Audience you want to reach

Set the Ground Rules – the worst they can do is decide not to interview you or broadcast the interview

Always be polite. If your attitude is not ready for primetime – it will definitely be ON primetime.

Most professional reporters will let you have a ‘do-over’ - if you start a response and then lose your place. Stop, pause, and then just restart your response. News packages don’t want to use pauses, ‘um’s’ and long descriptions. Help them stick to the facts.

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