



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

2011 *division*

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Understanding the dynamics of *leadership roles* within the context of *social networking*

MEDIA INTERVIEW TIPS & TECHNIQUES



Successful media interviews have three distinct parts:

- Triage
- Preparation
- Actual interview

Why do people get misquoted?

What are your rights when you're being interviewed?

- Set the ground rules?
- Approve the story before it is printed?
- Re-do the interview if you don't like it?
- Record the interview?

The Interview *Before* the Interview



Ask a lot of questions when the reporter first contacts you:

- What outlet?
- What format?
- What topics will be discussed?
- Will there be other guests/interviewees?

During that first contact:

- Get as much information as you can.
- Arrange for a call-back for the actual interview.

In preparing your message points, ask yourself:

- What is the main takeaway message I want to communicate on this subject— i.e., the headline?
- Write for the public, not your colleagues.
- Reverse the journal format.

Create your message points:

- Write them out.
- Practice delivering them.
- Translate your knowledge.

During the Interview

Consider these guidelines:

- **Deliver the headline first**—i.e., the most salient, important, brief takeaway message.
- **Be succinct:** The average media quote is now seven to nine words!
- **Use bridges and flags.**
- **Use the reporter's questions** as entry points into the interview—bridge to your message points.

Keep these suggestions in mind:

- **Do not fill in** the “silences” during the interview. Communicate your message point and stop.
- **Repeat** your main message points.
- **Correct** any misinformation or false premises.

Suggested bridges:

- “What’s important here is...”
- “The bottom line is...”
- “I understand your question, but I think the real issue is...”
- “Let’s get back to the data...”
- “I don’t know the answer to that question, but what I do know is...”

Suggested flags:

- “Here’s the most important finding...”
- “This is what the public needs to understand...”
- “The real issue is...”



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