

# TOP 10 MEDIA TIPS

1. Ask before you interview. Know what angle the reporter is taking and how you fit into the development of the overall story. Are you just a background interview, the centerpiece of one of many? Do you agree with the angle or are you the counterpoint? Does the reporter need more people to interview, additional background information or anything else you might provide? Are you the right person to do the interview or should you recommend someone else?
2. Be prepared. Watch the show. Read the paper. Who is the interviewer trying to reach? Put yourself in the “mind” of the audience and plan your interview by targeting what the audience wants to know.
3. Select your SOCOs. Have no more than two (three at the very most) main points that you want to make and have remembered by your audience.
4. Select examples to use in the interview that illustrate your SOCOs. Make sure examples involve real people in life situations that the audience will relate to. (*“One of the new moms in my practice was convinced she would have to choose between breastfeeding and returning to work. She’s delighted that she’s able to do both.”*)
5. Emphasize your SOCOs. State them more than once in the course of the interview and introduce them with strong language (“This is very important.” “Let me emphasize this point.” “If there’s one thing I think people should remember it is...”) that makes the reporter understand that this is information that should be used.
6. Anticipate key questions and think about your answers before the interview. Reporters are trained to look for controversy. To get an idea what a reporter will ask, discuss your topic with a neighbor or friend who doesn’t know much about the subject.
7. Be concise in your answers – avoid medical jargon and big words. Remember your audience’s level of interest and knowledge in your topic is limited – and their attention span is short.
8. Treat the interview as if you were counseling a parent. Be yourself. Be personable. Be sincere. Do all the things you would do as if counseling a parent.
9. Always, always, always tell the truth. Don’t mislead. Don’t hide behind nuances. Never lie.
10. Remember, there is no such thing as “off the record.” Do not say anything you do not want to see in print or hear on the air. Period. A reporter can always attribute your comments to “a source close to the subject,” find out the information from another source or, in time, simply forget where he got it and under what circumstances.

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