

# Dealing with the Media - Dos and Don'ts

## Dos:

- Be prepared.
- Talk to your client and assess the potential for media attention.
- Know when to call in the experts.
- Always remember you are in control of the interview; you are there to impart information, not just answer questions.
- Always remember the reporter is not your friend.
- Remain calm and pleasant.
- Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question or want a little more time to think.
- Answer exactly what is asked of you.
- Return to your key messages as often as possible.

## Don'ts:

- Don't go 'off the record' – there's no such thing.
- Do not lie – so many people have tried to get away with 'a little untruth' and it is always their undoing.
- Don't panic – return calls promptly, but after you've had time to think and confer, and if caught off-guard, ask the reporter's deadline and focus, promise to call them back shortly and do so.
- Do not speculate – those 'what if' questions.
- Don't leap to fill silences – answer the question and wait for the next one.
- Don't lose your temper if a reporter is being belligerent or demanding.
- Don't volunteer information – stick to the facts and the specific questions.

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