

Interview Preparation

76. Before setting up an interview between a reporter and your principal, assess the reporter's questions. Find out what the reporter knows, and confine the time limit of the interview in a way that benefits your principal or organization.
77. Prior to an interview, coordinate with other staff and create talking points. If appropriate, create exact sound bites and quotes for the principal to memorize.
78. Conduct preparation sessions with the principal before interviews. Include in these sessions only personnel who understand the media and message goals.
79. When preparing for an interview that could result in a negative story, engage in additional research; conduct additional preparation sessions; and prepare the principal to refocus hostile questions.
80. Coach your principal to try to keep the encounter professional, pleasant, and short when handling ambush interviews.
81. Use professional media trainers if the budget allows. They are often viewed more credibly by the principal, and can say things to him that you can't.
82. Monitor all interviews. Pay attention for factual errors made by the principal and correct them immediately after the interview is completed.

Internal Issues: Experts, Policy, Numbers, Leaks, Lawyers, and Language

83. Identify sources within your organization who will provide you with the information essential to doing your job. Set up information flow systems to ensure you are kept apprised of important developments within your organization.