



FIVE FAST TIPS FOR AN EXECUTIVE TO MAXIMIZE A MEDIA INTERVIEW

Every nonprofit executive should plan to be in the news. Whether promoting a program's successful outcomes or advocating a cause; announcing an event or recruiting volunteers, articles in magazines and local newspapers shine a positive light on a nonprofit and its achievements.

Let's consider that a phone interview has been arranged with a Metro reporter at a local newspaper. Here are five tips to maximize that discussion.

1. A reporter is NOT your friend. ANYTHING you say can be used in print and recordings. You may think the reporter has agreed that a discussion is *off the record* or *on background* or *not for attribution*. Be circumspect.
2. PREPARE. Make a list of THREE important points. Print it in 16 point type. This list will keep you focused and define the topic under discussion. Remember, it is a *phone interview*, so the reporter cannot see you looking at your notes.
3. DEVELOP MEMORABLE EXAMPLES for each of the three points. Analogies, visual imagery, word play, rhyme, alliteration and acronyms keep the reporter's (and reader's) interest. Perhaps a program gives middle-schoolers *homework help from high school heroes*. Be creative!
4. Try to **NOT REPEAT** a leading question. When a reporter tries to put words in your mouth, *close your lips and swallow*. Then answer. Take a breath to stay on track.
5. DO NOT ASK for nor expect to receive an advance look at the article or your quote.

BONUS: Write down the reporter's phone number and email address, so you can easily follow-up with: any materials you offered; additional details that were clarified later; or thoughts that escaped you in the heat of the moment.

EXTRA BONUS: Plan NOW to promote the article on your website and in your newsletter.

Want to practice? Need more tips? Contact me at janet@janetfalk.com or 212-677-5770.

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