Where to Begin?

1. Who is your audience?

2. Where do they get their information?

3. What does your audience want?

4. What do you want them to do?
When Media is Your Vehicle

• Know your goals and the action you seek from your target audience
• Be able to articulate a simple message, call to action
• Communicate clearly, consistently and accurately
• Understand the media before you begin
Understanding the Media

- Reporters are generalists and cover many topics
- Few have advanced degrees, in-depth knowledge
- Finely tuned sense of what is controversial
- Seek conflict, point/counterpoint
- Give great weight to opinions
- Often prize anecdotes over data
- Deadlines drive everything
Who Decides What is News?

NOT YOU
Should I Do an Interview?

• These are great opportunities that don’t come often
• An opportunity to present your message
• An opportunity to educate a reporter
• An opportunity to build trust for future stories, the ones you hope the media will cover
What UMC Does First

• Finds out the reporter’s deadline
• Determines the purpose of the interview and tries to solicit as many questions in advance as possible
• Sets and enforces the interview length
• Gives reporter background information
General Guidelines

• This is not a conversation
• Questions are vehicles to communicate your message
• Keep it simple
• Educate the reporter, without being condescending
• Be cautious, but honest
• Build trust
Tips for TV

- How you look matters
- Relax: breathe, slow down, pause, smile
- Posture, don’t fidget, stand if possible
- Don’t worry about awkward silences
- How you say it often matters more than what you say
  - Answer in complete sentences
  - Skip detail
  - Start over if it’s not live (and it rarely is)
Tips for Radio

• Is it live or recorded?
• Keep your notes in front of you, with key phrases highlighted
• Talk with your hands to give your voice energy
• If you don’t know an answer, pivot quickly to a talking point
• Again, keep your notes and materials in front of you for reference
• Use a hands free device, if you have one
• Go back to your talking points frequently
• Don’t fall victim to casual conversation
• Make yourself available for follow-up questions, clarifications
• Contact UMC for help with a correction if you feel you’ve been misquoted
### Sticky Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q: So what would happen if...</th>
<th>A: I can’t comment on hypothetical questions, but I can tell you...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q: So what you’re saying is...</td>
<td>A: No, that’s not what I’m saying. What I’m saying is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q: So-and-so says this...</td>
<td>A: I can’t comment on others, but what I can tell you is...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When Your Mind Goes Blank

• That’s an interesting question. I don’t know.
• I’ll have to get back to you.
• Pivot back to your talking points. Say
  • “The most important thing to remember is…”
  • “It all boils down to this.”
  • “If you remember nothing else, remember…”
  • “The main message I’m trying to convey is…”
Ready?

- Don’t worry too much.
  - It’s over quickly
  - The university enjoys tremendous good will
  - Rarely are reporters out to get you

- Be realistic about what media coverage can do
  - Starts the conversation, raises awareness or sparks interest
  - Be ready to capitalize on the attention
Practice

• Write a key message and four supporting points

• The University of Utah is...
  • It matters because...
  • It impacts...
  • Eventually...
  • We are supported by...
• Write a key message and four supporting points

• I study...
  • It matters because...
  • It impacts...
  • Eventually...
  • I’m supported by...