



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF UTAH®

University Marketing & Communications
Media Training

The Media & UMC



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

Print or Online

- 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

Q: So what would happen if...

A: I can't comment on hypothetical questions, but I can tell you...

Q: So what you're saying is...

A: No, that's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is...

Q: So-and-so says this...

A: I can't comment on others, but what I can tell you is...

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...

Practice

- Write a key message and four supporting points
- I study...
 - It matters because...
 - It impacts...
 - Eventually...
 - I'm supported by...