

Spokesperson Tip Sheet

Do's

- Keep your messages simple.
- Focus on your key messages and integrate those messages into your responses. (SOB = S - strategy; O - objective; B - bridge)
- Answer in full sentences.
- Always be professional.
- Look at the reporter not the camera.
- Take control of the interview and lead the reporter to where you want the conversation to go.
- Pause before answering.
- Be yourself.
- Use your tone, voice inflections, gestures and pauses for emphasis and transition, and to help the reporter understand the subject.
- Try to include a call to action.
- Politely correct inaccuracies.
- Summarize your points, where appropriate.
- Maintain eye contact, where possible.
- Smile when appropriate.
- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."
- Repeat links and phone numbers to ensure accuracy.
- Repetition improves retention. Don't be afraid to rephrase and repeat your key points.
- Keep Marcom informed about your media relations efforts.
- Share the links to your story placements with Marcom, so that they can be repurposed through campus social media and other communications channels.

Don'ts

- Don't use the phrase, "No comment." Choose another phrase like "I don't know" or "I'll look into that for you."
- Never go "off the record." Everything is "on the record."
- Don't succumb to interviewing traps like paraphrasing and leading questions.
- Don't ask to review the story.
- Don't fight or argue.
- Don't offer your personal opinion.
- Don't wear white (on camera).
- Don't use jargon. (Limit even when conducting trade interviews.)

Bridging phrases

- "I'm glad you brought that up, ..."
- "That's an important point, ..."
- "Your question relates to ..."
- "The most important take aways for your readers/viewers/listeners are ..."