

## Media Interview Tips: Part 1 of 2

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I'm constantly intrigued by the myth that media interviews are difficult or unfair to the interviewee. "They misquoted me" is a common argument among those who are upset with a comment that appeared in print. What they really mean is that the quote was accurate but not in the way they meant it to sound.

It is not the reporter's job to make an individual or company look good in an interview; their job is to provide the community with accurate facts, and in some cases, those facts may not be to your benefit. It is the interviewee's role to sound as best as possible.

In a two-part series, I've highlighted some tips that we regularly provide to our clients in media training sessions.

- **Listen to the question; answer the question.** Listen to any interview and you'll find the subject avoids (on purpose or by accident) the question that was asked. Individuals and companies automatically lose credibility when a straightforward question is evaded.
- **There are three general answers to any question.** They are: 1) Here is the answer to your question; 2) I don't know the answer to your question (but I can find out); 3) I am unable to provide you with the answer due to company or confidentiality issues.
- **Know your message points.** You/your organization is being interviewed because of specific expertise. Know and express the key points you want to get across.
- **Talk in sound bites.** Keep your answers precise. Whether it is an interview with broadcast or print media, there's only so much space and/or time available to get your points across, so practice funneling your key messages into 10-second talking points (i.e. 'sound bites').

Check back in two weeks for additional tips to assist in your media interview opportunities.