

## Knowing the Three Answers to Any Media Question

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Based on the feedback received from the previous column on media interview tips, this column provides additional guidelines in answering media questions. First and foremost, realize that your organization is being asked to comment because you are seen as an expert on a specific topic.

With that in mind, there really are only three ways to answer any media question:

- **“Here’s the answer to your question.”** Seems simple because it is. Ninety percent of any questions you are asked you will know the answers to – that’s why the media chose to interview you.
- **“I don’t know, but I’ll find out the answer and get back to you.”** There will be times when you will be asked about specific details that you don’t have readily available. Reporters realize that you have not memorized or may not know certain information and need to research it. Ask the reporter when s/he will need the information and provide it to them within that deadline.
- **“I cannot share that information with you because…”** There will always be specific information that you cannot share with the media due to confidentiality issues. Most HR and legal issues remain confidential in nature as do budgetary concerns of private companies.

Recognizing you are an authority on the topic you are asked to comment about and that there are only three ways to truly answer any question should help calm any anxiousness you have in speaking with the media.