

# When a Reporter Calls, do You Answer?

Use these 5 tips to prep for your next media interview



- 1 HAVE A PLAN.** A media interview is a business interaction, in which you're telling a story to communicate a message. Go into every interview with a plan, knowing the reporter's focus and style, and remember that you control what comes out of your own mouth.
- 2 DEVELOP YOUR MESSAGES.** Prepare 2-3 messages tailored to the interview. Don't memorize them. Internalize them. Turn them into sound bites that a reporter might actually write down or record. Don't just recite them; weave them into a story that is authentic and memorable. And back up each message with easily digestible proof points.
- 3 GET REAL.** Paint a picture for reporters and your audience, to make your messages and proof points come alive. Concrete examples of real people encountering challenges and overcoming them will evoke emotion. And presenting your own experience and point of view will drive it home.
- 4 BRIDGE THE GAP.** Stay in control of the interview by transitioning, or bridging back to your point with such phrases as, "what I can tell you is ... " or "the real issue is ... "
- 5 FLAG WHAT'S IMPORTANT.** Always come back to emphasize the points that are most important to YOU. Use flagging phrases like "this is important" or "the bottom line is..." to highlight a key message or sound bite.

➡ **BONUS TIP:** Remember, **NOTHING** is ever, ever, **OFF THE RECORD.**