



## **Ten Tips to Nail your Media Interview**

### **1. Have a Clear Objective**

Why are you doing this interview? What impact do you want to have? Do you want to inform, educate, debunk myths, boost your profile and / or compel people to act?

### **2. Tailor your Message to your Audience**

Your choice of words, your angle and your tone of voice will be determined by who you're targeting – e.g., investors, families, policymakers, customers. Put yourself in their shoes and appeal to their interests by using relatable examples. Your messaging will be different with a journalist from *The Financial Review* compared to if you were on Breakfast TV.

### **3. Manage Where and When you Conduct the Interview**

Journalists can be pushy. They want your comment here and now so they can meet their deadline. But you often have some wriggle room. Ask them what their deadline is and then choose a mutually convenient time and location that reflects your brand – e.g., with your logo in the background.

### **4. Prepare your Key Messages**

These need to be water-tight and bullet proof. Don't speak into the microphone without them. Make your messages clear, succinct, structured and relevant. Use the structure: PRESS– Point, Reason, Example, So What? Sell It. We practice this on camera in our TM Media workshops.

### **5. Anticipate Possible Questions**

Expect questions that are topical and trending in your industry or field. Also expect the unexpected. You don't have to completely answer controversial or irrelevant questions. Instead, partially answer and then pivot to your key messages with a bridging phrase.



## **6. Bridging Phrases**

These lifesavers help you link from a tricky question back to your core message -e.g. *'You'd have to ask the minister about that but what I can tell you is that our company is working around the clock to fix this problem....'* Or *'That's an interesting question but our focus is on our customers....'* Or *'I'm not sure where you got those statistics because our experience shows that...'*

## **7. Don't Speculate on Hypotheticals**

Journalists love to speculate on worse case scenarios: *What if the case numbers increase? What if you lose the election? What if these cyber-attacks spread?* Don't take the bait or get caught up in the drama. Stick to the facts and what you know for certain now. *'I don't have a crystal ball, however right now the situation is under control ...'*

## **8. Don't Say anything 'Off the Record'. Ever.**

## **9. Don't Fudge Statistics or Lie.**

It will come back to bite you. Be honest and say: *'I don't have those figures right now. I will get back to you with them.'* And make sure you do.

## **10. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.**

An interview is not the time for an original thought. Before an interview give a colleague a list of possible questions and practise delivering your key messages no matter what you're asked.

Better still, book media training with TM Media and leverage the power of the media to tell your story, your way.