

Media Relations Guidelines

1. Be courteous (even if your interviewer is not).
2. Be helpful—even if it doesn't result in a story (it can pay off for you later).
3. Be quick and responsive in responding to inquiries. (Remember—reporters are always on deadline; if you don't get back to them right away, you may miss your chance to respond.)
4. Be business-like and professional when working with a reporter. Don't think that being a reporter's friend is going to help you out—good journalists are objective.
5. Identify your core message and keep going back to it.
6. Use simple analogies to help make a point (when appropriate).
7. Always refer to your company by its full name rather than by an abbreviated name.
8. Say “we” instead of “I.” You are representing an organization/company.
9. Don't make an issue of a non-issue (it's just as important to not overreact as it is to not under react).

Four “Nevers”:

1. NEVER lie to the media.
2. NEVER say “no comment.” A reporter could infer there is something you're not saying.
3. NEVER go “off the record.” Always assume what you say will be reported.
4. NEVER speculate about a situation—stick with the facts. (Don't try to be an expert in an area that you know little or nothing about.)

How do you influence a story?

- By supplying the reporter with research, statistics, background information, etc.
- By supplying the reporter with names of people they can interview (subject experts, etc.)
- By offering to be available for further questions, fact verification, etc.
- By offering photographs, graphics or illustrations for the story, if applicable.