

## Fact Sheet: Giving Interviews

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- ✓ Prepare and practice the HVCC message points. You can find these at [insert link here]. Your goal is to control the interview as much as possible and be sure the message points are communicated. Anticipate difficult questions and how you will answer them.
- ✓ Select no more than three or four key message points you want to communicate to the audience and focus on getting those points across.
- ✓ Know your interviewer. If possible, review the program on which you are to appear or read articles by the reporter who will interview you. Know the editorial stance of the station or publication.
- ✓ Know your audience. Each publication, television or radio station has different audiences and needs.
- ✓ Never lie, guess or speculate. If you do not know the answer to a question, offer to get back to the reporter with the required information.
- ✓ Set the ground rules for the interviews before hand, including the length of the interview and the range of topics to be covered.
- ✓ Do not say anything “off the record.”
- ✓ Be relaxed and cordial without being silly or flippant.
- ✓ Use short and succinct sentences in your answers.
- ✓ Avoid using slang, jargon or acronyms.
- ✓ Do not let words be put in your mouth. Repeat the answer in your own words.
- ✓ Use concrete, not abstract words. Use personal examples to make your point.
- ✓ Support your statements with anecdotes or quotes from experts.
- ✓ Do not argue or attack the interviewer or the media in general – it detracts from your message and generally works against you. Be honest, cooperative and friendly – even on a story you do not wish to publish.
- ✓ Do not underestimate or overestimate the reporter’s skills – always assume they know the subject, but be prepared in case they don’t.