

Fact Sheet: Principles and Protocols

- ✓ Always be truthful and be certain that your story is complete and in context. Remember that *your* credibility is at stake.
- ✓ Never assume that you are speaking “off the record.” If you don’t want to see it in print or on the air, don’t say it.
- ✓ If you promise an exclusive, give an exclusive.
- ✓ Never ask to see a story before it is printed.
- ✓ Be aware of deadlines. Material that does not get to the media in time, won’t be used. If a reporter calls for information that is not immediately available, get the exact day and time of their deadline and respect it.
- ✓ Use “pitch” letters or e-mails as a tool for promoting your story. Make your points concisely.
- ✓ Media-related activities – press releases, press conferences, etc. – should *a/ways* be followed by a personal phone call to the reporter or editor to establish contact and credibility, solicit an interview, answer questions or encourage coverage.
- ✓ Be prepared to provide backup materials. If you don’t know the answer to a question, refer the reporter to someone who can be of help, or arrange to get them the information.
- ✓ Consider the needs and interests of the individual reporter. To the extent possible, tailor your efforts to individual reporters and media outlets.
- ✓ Try maximizing coverage by repackaging your story with a new angle and pitching it to specialized editors or publications.