

SPOKESPERSON TIP SHEET:

During an interview

DO NOT	DO
Answer questions	Deliver your message
Explain your politics	Deliver your message and nothing more
Have a conversation with the reporter	Speak to your audience

Every message has 3 parts

Who are you?	My name is Angus Maguire. I'm a father of two, and I help take care of my aging parents.
What are you doing?	I'm here today giving a training about how to talk to reporters and be a spokesperson for a cause.
Why are you doing it?	I'm doing this because I want my children to grow up in a world where the people in this training have been successful in their fights and in moving the world to be a more just place.

Imagine your audience

Who are they?	Imagine the person or family or group you are delivering a message to.
How do you talk to them?	Think about how you might talk about your issue with a skeptical relative at a family gathering. How does your language change when you are talking to someone who is listening, but doesn't agree with you?
Why is it important to them?	What are their interests? Why does your issue matter to them? This means you can't just say "This fact is important." You have to say "This fact is important, <i>and here's why.</i> "

4 things to remember when talking to reporters

DO	DO NOT	
Pause, gather your thoughts, then answer	Feel like you have to look smart and answer quickly	It's what you actually say that matters. No one will put your long pause on TV or in a quote.
<i>Respond</i> with your message	Answer their question	You don't want to totally ignore the question, you just want to find a way to get from the question to your message.
Stop when you've delivered your message	Keep talking to fill the space	Reporters will stay quiet to encourage you to keep talking. You don't have to. Let them fill the space with a new question.
Assume everything you say can be reported, so just stay on-message and you'll be fine	Talk to the reporter off the record, or talk candidly when you think you are "outside" the interview	Reporters sometimes look for ways to catch you off-guard or in a less formal response. It's up to you to stay on message.

Reporters

- Regular people, with opinions and biases, some in our favor and some not
- Think of themselves as professionals.
- Believe being a reporter is an important positive role in society.
- Part of a community of reporters who talk amongst themselves.
- Not your friend, not your enemy